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George B. Russell

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ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
PASSIONS.

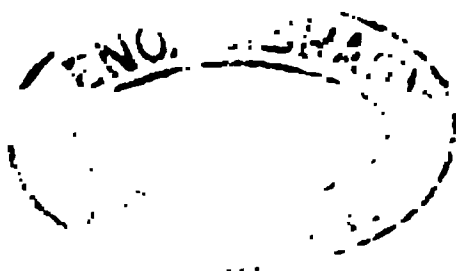
HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
PASSIONS,
AND THEIR
INFLUENCE ON THE CONDUCT OF MANKIND;
WITH
SOME SUBORDINATE SKETCHES
OF
HUMAN NATURE AND HUMAN LIFE.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME FIRST.

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PREFACE.

THE influence of the passions being the source of human action, the basis of comfort, or the bane of felicity, whatever may illustrate their origin and progress, their inversion or subsidence, cannot be void of interest to those who find pleasure in contemplation.

All the primitive mental affections seem gifted for uniform purposes, and as their operation is exercised on a system composed of the same materials, wherever subsisting they are to be distinguished by intensity alone. A certain association of people, therefore, more or less numerous, and of longer or shorter duration, perhaps, will elucidate the entire history of the human race. Experience is commonly proportioned to the survivance of individuals, and their intermixture with society.

The subsequent illustrations are copiously deduced from all authorities, and blended together from the records of every age and nation; for ancient and modern æras, foreign and domestic history, are terms too indefinite to convey an adequate knowledge of human nature, which never can be reached by the mere reciprocity of words.

Perhaps the comparative condition of mankind is rateable chiefly by stages of civilization, as their opinions are then founded on axioms of the nearest analogy. Isolated facts afford unquestionable testimony of the transitions and excesses of which the mind, throughout its wonderful progress, is susceptible; but satisfactory conclusions are best obtained from a wide survey of the world, and a great corroboration of incident. Impartial contemporary observation, always of avowed utility, forms a very meagre portion of the most familiar written history; and, doubtless, many immense chasms have been supplied solely by imagination. Judicial proceedings, though not infallible, are to be assumed as preferable historical evidence; for falsehood is surely of easier detection where the single purpose of investigation is to elicit truth.

The author having in general presumed on the reader's inexperience, has led to the discussion of certain topics rather to be considered interesting than debateable, and to a greater profusion of illustrations. Original authorities have been resorted to in so far as practicable, and passages are frequently presented entire, partly to preserve or restore the purity of citations, partly because the learned may be at variance regarding their precise interpretation. Esteeming authenticity the first recommendation, many examples appear though wanting the merit of novelty: some are reluctantly drawn from sources as yet unconfirmed by the test of time;

probably others more appropriate have been overlooked; nor is it unlikely that the retrenchment of a few superfluities shall be desired by an erudite and discriminative taste. The largest stores of private information are scanty amidst the mass of universal knowledge—innumerable fallacies and imperfections are betrayed in the most careful compositions. That the fabulist may polish blemishes, and perfect his narrative, he has only to encourage the flights of fancy, and select the ornaments of language. If the historian would replenish vacuity, and veil his defects, he must often content himself with meaner aid. Admitted fable, in all its multifarious shapes, is sedulously rejected here. Several works of reputed excellence have proved unattainable by the author; but the sentiments of the most illustrious writers are appealed to invariably, as deserving the greatest deference. If familiar names be not classed along with them, it is from assigning the highest as its rightful place to instructive literature.

The history of the human race is too ample to admit of more than the most circumscribed and abrupt discussion of a few prominent incidents within the narrow compass of these volumes; nor do the various aspects under which the influence of the passions, or the motives and conduct of our fellow-creatures may be considered, permit us to insist that no other conclusions than the following are deducible, even from the principles which have been assumed.

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ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS
OF THE
PASSIONS.

CHAPTER I.

PERISHABLE CONDITION OF MANKIND.

MAN by nature is a helpless and perishable being, dependant at the hour of his birth on the fostering care of others: seeking subsistence in maturer age from his strength or contrivance, and sheltering his unprotected frame from the intemperance of the elements. Though in the full enjoyment of vigorous youth, life is ever precarious: neither the insidious progress of disease, nor the sudden dangers of accident, are postponed for senility and decrepitude. The mortal blow is struck without a distant warning,—when least expected—when most irresistible;

and were it not from counteracting principles, wisely devised for preservation, the human race would soon disappear and be annihilated.

No one can seriously contemplate his own delicate structure, without admiring its component parts, or without amazement how the frail tenement has held so long together: An unwary step will dislocate his joints,—a grain of sand will extinguish sight,—his very soul may escape by a wound which is scarcely perceptible. Too truly he is composed of perishable materials, which, in their dissolution, shall speedily mingle him with his kindred dust, resolve into air, and vanish.*

But this is an arrangement essential for the well-being of the universe. If unceasing increase be inconsistent with limited space, and the laws of animal organization prohibit its eternity, death is the indispensable consequence of life, that a place may be left for the new evolutions or creations which are destined to occupy the sublunary world.

The necessities of man, in his original state, are restricted to procuring food and obtaining shelter; nor do his speculations then extend beyond them. But that clime is rarely allotted where, amidst never-fading verdure, he can screen himself under the spreading foliage, where the falling fruit is ready to deepen the soil, or renew the parent tree in its decay. A barren and inhospitable region re-

* *Plenck, Hygrology, p. 252.*

fuses the means of vegetable subsistence; he has often to contend with beasts of prey for the objects of pursuit,—the products of industry are unknown. What conceptions of the cravings of nature can be formed by us amidst the profusion with which we are always surrounded?—teaching us impatience if only one of many daily meals be delayed. We revel in superfluities; but there are modern tribes who, like the Scythians of old, bind up their bodies to repress the ravening of hunger,* or endeavour to assuage it by swallowing lumps of earth and clay.† Reptiles, or nauseous insects, inspiring us with abhorrence, are greedily devoured: and the famished savage, instead of repining at the sterility of his country, feasts on the loathsome carcase of some huge monster cast up by the waves, rejoicing at the good fortune which so opportunely relieves his distresses.‡

If the territory he occupies be shared with ferocious animals, a mutual war is waged between them, wherein man must fall a frequent victim before his cruel enemy. If his superior power or cunning be triumphant, he becomes master of their spoils, which from trophies are converted into raiment. But mul-

* *Aulus Gellius*, *Noctes Atticæ*, lib. xvi. cap. 3.

† *Labillardiere*, *Voyage a la recherche de la Perouse*, tom. ii. p. 305. *Rossel*, *Voyage d'Entrecasteaux*, tom. i. p. 340.

‡ *Collins*' *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, vol. i. p. 556. *Syme*, *Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava*, p. 134. *Asiatic Researches*, vol. iv. p. 385.

titudes yet are strangers to the use of the simplest kind of clothing, who despise it as a veil, and complain that it covers them with shame :* Nor do they know the means of constructing even the rudest habitations. Projecting cliffs guard them from the tempest, and they retire to their repose in excavations which have been fashioned without the intervention of human art.†

Constant exposure to rigorous climates, scanty and uncertain subsistence, accumulated hardships, operate sensibly both on the personal and mental constitution. The corporeal fabric is weak and attenuated, the nerveless mind is circumscribed within the narrowest sphere : each is incapacitated for enterprise. How infinite the disparity, how immeasurable is the distance, between the savage and cultivated man ! Let us be grateful for the dispensations which have been showered upon us, and for the benefits inherited without any merits of our own.

* *Gilii*, Saggio di Storia Americana, tom. ii. p. 46. *Voyage a Guiane et a la Cayenne*, p. 346. *Gumilla*, Histoire de l'Oronoque, ch. 7.

† *Flinders*, Voyage to Terra Australis, vol. ii. p. 145. *Peron* Voyage de Decouvertes aux Terres Australes, tom. i. var. loc. *Lichtenstein*, Travels in Southern Africa, vol. ii. p. 46. 93 : The Bosjeman "is fond of taking up his abode for the night in caverns among the mountains or clefts in the rocks : in the plain he makes himself a hole in the ground, or gets into the midst of a bush, where, bending the boughs around him, they are made to serve as a shelter against the weather, or against an enemy, or against wild beasts."

But for the progress of our forefathers, we, the most polished of nations, now might be roaming naked in the woods, sleeping in gloomy caverns, and sustaining ourselves by the chace, or the wild productions of spontaneous vegetation.

Independently of the difficulties with which mankind in possession of all their energies have to struggle in the natural state, other and more awful visitations are incident to every condition. The earth is shaken to its foundations: mountains are overwhelmed, floods and conflagrations burst forth, rivers forsake their channel—entire cities, with their wretched inhabitants, are absorbed in gulfs unfathomable—all is involved in promiscuous ruin. To change the face of the world is the work of a moment. Science enables us to read in its structure the convulsions it has undergone; and could we penetrate those dark ages where no record ascends, we should find generation after generation swept into eternity. Yet such is the hardihood of man—if himself escaping the havoc, his dwelling is reared amidst the very scene of desolation: he ploughs, he sows, he awaits in thoughtless security to reap the harvest of his labours—but again is the strife renewed, and he and his posterity perish.*

* *Sarconi Istoria del Tremoto nelle Calabria. Vivenzio Storia de Tremuoti. Relation of the Earthquake at Lima, chap. 2. Philosophical Magazine, vol. xxvii. ; Fall of the mountain of Rosenberg in 1806. Philosophical Transactions, vol. xviii. p. 10. 83. Vol. xlix. var. loc. Humboldt Voyages, tom. i. p. 306. 509.*

Notwithstanding he is safe from the elements, and personal exigencies be profusely satisfied, man must not delude himself in the vain belief that life is held by a firm tenure. It is ever ready to be reft from him. A fourth of the millions ushered to the light, do not see twelve months completed: half the human race die before the age of seventeen, and only a fourth of the living have surpassed the term of forty years. In certain countries few survive so long; nor in the most salubrious does one in thousands attain a venerable age.* Legions are devoured by pestilence: distempers almost unheeded in our temperate regions, spread terror and dismay in others. "The husband forsakes his wife, the mother her children, and the son his father, often leaving them in their miserable huts to the ravages of famine, or the wild beasts of the forest."† From dread of contagion, the infected is consumed in his dwelling by means of fiery arrows:‡ Doors are walled up to preclude his access; or among the lower penalties on his affliction, he is banished to receptacles established on the high ways, there to pro-

* *Robert L'Influence de la Revolution Française sur sa Population*, tom. i. p. 165. "At the village of Rucello de Termini in Sicily, few instances are upon record of any person's having exceeded the age of forty."—*Blaquiere*, *Letters from the Mediterranean*, vol. i. p. 13.

† *Cordiner*, *Description of Ceylon*, vol. i. p. 354.

‡ *Molina*, *Geographical, Civil, and Natural History of Chili*, vol. i. p. 31. These two authors allude to smallpox.

tract a painful existence from the hand of casual charity.* Nevertheless, so rapid are the strides of mortality, so vast the wreck of mankind, that the survivors sometimes are scarcely in sufficient numbers to perform the last sad offices to their departed friends;† and thus are not only the lesser tribes extirpated, but the territory of once powerful nations is reduced to dreary silence and solitude.

We subsist in the proud confidence of uninterrupted felicity—to-morrow is not to bring us care. Inconsiderate mortals! There is not an atom of the human frame exempt from disease and disfiguration: innumerable maladies far short of threatening life, yet intolerable, are secretly nurtured, and ready to manifest their virulence, the moment the body is prepared for them. Unsightly tumours cover the skin:‡ How many fair sufferers have recoiled in disgust from their own image, once beautiful to behold! That chief ornament of our race, the hair, and of those in whom it is the most ornamental, becomes agglutinated together, and interwoven in an inextricable mass, offensive and contagious.§ The limbs have grown distorted and re-

* *Savary*, *Lettres sur la Grece*, p. 283; speaking of the lepers of Crete.

† *Russel*, *Natural History of Aleppo*, vol. ii. p. 335.

‡ *Foderé*, *Traité du Goitre et du Cretinisme*. *Ramond* *Observations dans les Pyrennées*, p. 204.

§ *La Fontaine*, *Traité de la Plique Polonoise*. *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. xxxvii. p. 50. 428; vol. xliv. p. 556; vol. for 1753, p. 297.

versed : nay, the bones themselves, so callous to appearance, have softened and dissolved during corporeal decay. These are awful pictures : but they disclose little of the truth ; for there is no species of misery whereof the utmost extremity is reserved from mankind. Even our animated system seems to be separated asunder by mental alienation, while the body flourishes in health and vigour. Have not parents besides to deplore, the imbecility, combined with the deformity, of their offspring ? and some have been fated to shudder at having given birth to beings that scarcely exhibit the human form. *

Man is therefore apparently a humble, a miserable, and a perishable creature ; and nature may seem to us less provident for the protection of individuals, than for the conservation of their race. But the distribution of good surpasses the subsisting evil ; and it has pleased the omnipotent Author to preserve an equilibrium among the parts of the universe, whereby all their functions are fulfilled. The scene is hourly changing ; while, after the lapse of ages, the common balance continues undisturbed. Elsewhere we shall find that liberal compensations are dispensed to meet defects—that affliction is softened by resignation—that fortitude conquers

* *Moreau de la Sarthe* Description des Principales Monstruosites dans l'Homme et dans les Animaux. *Housset* Ecart de la Nature. *Malebranche* Recherche de la Verité, liv. ii. ch. 7. § 3.

pain—that the fascination of mental embellishment disguises personal imperfections, and if, from its frailty, the earthly tenement disappears, in successive generations, intellectual benefits survive for the use of posterity.

The universal harmonies are evidently disposed in regular arrangement, and connected by an endless chain. If some of the necessary links seem wanting, or in disorder, it is because their relation and continuity are invisible to human perceptions.—What is that creative power which has given an impulse to the boundless efficiency of nature—which has fashioned so many objects, so many creatures independent of each other, so many parts divisible to infinity? The structure of the humblest utterly defies imitation: Scarcely can the most simple be intelligibly explained: The principle of life itself is wrapt in impenetrable mystery.—Our reflections are involuntarily carried beyond this mortal sphere.

Let us not presumptuously arrogate, that in the course of a few and fleeting years our knowledge can compass the wonderful operations environing us: the wider the circle which the mind embraces, the more does it discover how great its own deficiencies, how admirable the novelties to be explored.

Amidst the incessant repletion of the earth with mankind, amidst the constant decay and destruction, each of the countless millions quitting its surface has been the theatre of an host of propensities

and passions, and leaves a history behind. Attempting to trace the most prominent of these to their sources—contemplating their use and their effects, in so far as permitted by our restricted understanding—will open up new and more interesting views of the world, at the same time that we shall gain some salutary principles for the government of ourselves.

CHAPTER II.

EVOLUTION OF THE MALEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

WHEN the physical wants of man are supplied so as to leave no cravings of necessity, the mental affections of which he is susceptible, already in operation, begin to take a wider range, and to manifest themselves under multiplied forms. But previously, a kind of instinct, obscure and mysterious in its origin, whether resulting from some uneasy or from some pleasurable sensation, stimulates us either to seek or to shun a certain condition, and thus betrays our earliest inclinations. The passions are coeval with existence; they precede and continue independent of reason, which flies before them, yielding up the human frame to their violence. Awakened by impressions real or imaginary on the senses, they inflame by gradual excitement to a terrific paroxysm, which, after preserving a tumultuous mastery, subsides by corresponding transitions, permitting reason to regain its empire. Is this most precious gift, one which enables us to govern the world, bestowed for subjugation of the passions, or to invest us with the powers of discrimination? Have we the faculty of repressing our propensities, our appetites, or passions, excepting while they re-

main in the lower stages? The deliberations of reason and the paroxysms of passion, are of irreconcilable quality: they cannot be harboured under the same tenement.

The animal system, by a wonderful arrangement, being adapted for every modification, so as we subsist in a solitary or a social state, there are infinite varieties of the passions developed for the purpose, first, of self-preservation and individual comfort, next, to cherish and protect our fellow-creatures. After this a vast and complicated series opens, which cannot be referred to either of these important principles designed by the benevolence of nature.

Man in a state of absolute tranquillity resembles an image: his features are placid and undisturbed; his mind unoccupied, is prepared to receive its impressions from every different sense. The lightning flashes, the thunder rolls, or he is pierced by a hidden foe. A sentiment of danger, or sudden wrath, ensues: he trembles, he flies, or he is inspirited to vengeance. Self-preservation instantly engages him.

Fear and anger may be classed with the earliest affections: they are unfolded in the train of the senses themselves, they originate nearest to the moment of birth, and accompany us closest to the period of death. They are summoned into action during the shortest existence: and it is probable that self-preservation is their common object.

All the finer order of sentimental emotions, love, sympathy, gratitude, or esteem, those which take an interest in the welfare of others, are of much later and more complex evolution. Nature therefore designs that our primary care shall be self. It is not until ensured of safety that we look around us, begin to covet, to seize, and convert every thing to our use.

Although the human race be universally susceptible of impressions, because the same senses are universally distributed, and thence the rudiments of every passion implanted in the mind, each individual is not alike liable to the commencement, the progress, and the excess of all. It is opposed by the peculiarities of the system. Certain passions are but slightly evolved, or entirely dormant, in some: in others they are blunted, or those the most readily kindled and once raging, are now quiescent, to be roused no more.

Frequently the mental affections assume such a complicated aspect in their infinite shades, diversities, and combinations, as to distract the subjects of their operation, and confound the spectator attempting either to trace them to their source, or to follow them to their termination. Instead of the original feeling advancing by an ordinary progression to fulfil a definite purpose, it is absorbed in a stronger affection, which becoming vehement passion, then undergoes an inversion apparently adverse to the design of nature. Love is converted to hatred;

sympathy and antipathy coalesce. In the regular course, however, it appears, that, from the impression imparted by an image or an external object, sentiment, affection, and passion, are generated successively; that, the paroxysm over, the affection declines, the sentiment is weakened, the object obliterated, and tranquillity regained.

But it is only their most simple aspect, and when plainly exhibited, that enables us to form conjectures regarding the use and condition of the different affections of the mind: for they are liable besides to innumerable capricious deviations, from what we hold as their ordinary progression, which cannot be referred to any distinct or rational cause.

If the senses be the medium of transmitting impressions, whereby the mental energies are awakened, none can be bestowed in vain. It is evident that a universal harmony regulates the world, nor is it known that any of the arrangements subsisting are nugatory. But with the purpose of many of the leading and subordinate features we are manifestly unacquainted; and, owing to ourselves or to accidents, they seem, in our apprehension, to be defective or defeated.

Doubtless, all the senses are to be exercised, otherwise they would not have been gifted; yet as we are far removed from a state of nature by the substitution of an artificial condition, we must guard against the immediate effect of their impressions: They would lead into perpetual error and inconsistency.

The senses are ever ready to deceive us, and the passions to send us astray. Were we to trust to any one of the former without comparing and analysing the impressions upon it by some of the others, or without that previous experience which becomes habit, we should wander in endless fallacies. How imperfect a guide is sight to distance or magnitude, how easily is the hearing confounded by sounds, or the touch by substances for the first time offered! Without a special shade for reference, who will agree on colours? One object is believed to be larger or nearer than another, while it is actually smaller or more remote: the direction, intensity, and description of sounds, are continually mistaken; and it is rarely that the touch of itself can distinguish what is presented to it. So it is with the other senses: they are scarcely to be trusted singly for communicating the truth. Something more is necessary. They must be in combined and reciprocal exercise: instead of confiding in one, we find ourselves obliged to assist and correct it by the rest. Their united operation conveys the reality free of its original obscurity to the mind. This repeated exercise becomes experience, which enables us to determine from simple perceptions without resorting to analysis, and lays the foundation of the highest powers of judgment in discrimination. Nevertheless the fallibility of the senses is so great, the structure of the mental system so imperfect, we are so impatient of reflection, and our reason in itself

is so weak and restricted, that we cannot escape erroneous conclusions, and that distinct view of the relation of things which constitutes knowledge is disguised from us.

Yet all that is said of the imperfection of the senses, applies to the cultivated or artificial state of man. Possibly in his natural condition they are adapted to every benefit or necessity: then, their only purpose may be to “render us acquainted with those things either useful or inconvenient.”* Do not we witness the fact among those rude nations who subsist by the chase, or whose reciprocal alarms for injury excite a watchfulness and an exercise, whereby the senses, if not originally more perfect than among us, are wonderfully refined and improved? But we cannot reason conclusively on the pristine state of man. Except in the solitary instances which doubtful narratives record, what he may be in his first, his lowest and untutored condition, is quite unknown; we can only judge from his approximations to it compared with his gradual advances through numerous stages to the highest polish imparted by civilization. By this it is undoubted, that our propensities, dispositions, and habits, are eminently affected; that no longer finding ourselves compelled to trust to the same sources of information regarding the properties of such things as are barely useful in a natural

* *Malebranche Recherche de la Verité*, liv. i. ch. 6. § 2, 3.

state, the organs of perception are allowed to remain unemployed: that besides we are so much influenced by example, education, and prejudice, that a partial alteration is effected in the corporeal frame, and an entire revolution in the intellectual system. The rudiments of nature indeed, so difficult to be quelled, occasionally break forth—but to be instantly repressed and subjugated.

Elucidations of the origin, the progress, the paroxysms, and subsidence of the passions, therefore, must be defective, for the proper sources of information are unattainable; they cannot extend beyond the artificial and complicated condition of the human race, where nature is confused by interference with her precepts. We know that the passions are dormant, by having seen them rage: we conclude, that it is according to the relation between the individuals and the surrounding objects that they are generated, and it is obvious that they are unequally and irregularly evolved. Thus we must be content with studying the forms under which they are exhibited, for it is difficult to render more recondite investigations satisfactory.

We speak familiarly of the laws of nature and elementary principles, though in truth we are acquainted with neither; but beholding a uniform course, and being checked in attempting to discover the constituent basis of things, we conclude that all is directed by special ordinances, and that the elements are few. It is probable that they are so in

reality ; our whole condition resolves into good and evil, our whole reasoning into positive and negative, and every alternate position is direct or inverse. But seemingly there is an intermediate stage, or an oscillatory state of suspense, longer or shorter, weaker or stronger, until at last the preponderance is decided. Perhaps the essence of the passions centers exclusively in the sense of good or evil, and although modified into a multitude of aspects and a multitude of names, according to complication and intensity, they chiefly resolve into two corresponding elementary principles, love and hate. Plausible arrangements may partition them, into selfish or private, where self holds the primary share, social or public, which involve the interest of others, and antisocial, which originate in the desire to injure. But this is an arbitrary classification. Some concentrate all the passions in love alone. Some restrict their source to pleasure and pain : eleven distinct passions are enumerated by others ; and many consider those as different in essence, which differ only in their object or vehemence : nor do they sufficiently appreciate the effects of education. Certainly the greater proportion of all the mental affections originate directly or indirectly in love and hate, whether they be characterized as sympathy and antipathy, desire and aversion, benevolence and malevolence, or by other denominations. They spring from a feeling or sentiment of good or evil in regard to ourselves, either imagined,

experienced, or contemplated, and they issue in the design of good or evil in relation to others.*

Notwithstanding we may venture to assume the most prominent features of a few for the grounds of historical illustration, we must not pretend to determine the precise purpose of the various mental affections. We can only offer conjectures, in the course of which we shall find it necessary to be satisfied with consulting history rather than exacting definitions or demonstrations. It may be argued, indeed, that the selfish affections move us to seek for safety, or to embark in quest of pleasure: that the social are benevolent, and move us for the welfare of others: that fear is awakened to induce us to withdraw from danger. Thence, that solicitude about those whom we regard is of a mixed character, compounded of love and apprehension. The purpose of love is to approach and preserve, that of hatred is to avoid or destroy.

There is no affection of the mind, however faint, indistinct, and obscure in its origin, which does not swell to unconquerable violence, overthrowing reason, and terminating in some sad catastrophe. We become frantic with rage, maddened with jealousy, we are convulsed with terror, we sink under shame, or pine away in grief and disappointment. But it would be rash to charge nature with inconsis-

* Phrenological systems being yet in infancy, it would be premature to reason on them until their foundation be better confirmed.

tency, though permitting the birth of such passions as may prove fatal to the fabric of mankind. For, could beings endowed with our exquisite sensibilities subsist under other conditions? Could we, who rank so high in the animal scale as to have left the state appointed to us, be capable of meliorating our own personal situation, and of providing for that of posterity, with obtuse perceptions and blunted feelings? Possibly this excessive susceptibility is an indispensable ingredient in the peculiar species of existence assigned to the human race, because certain admirable qualities are at the same time conjoined with it. If productive of inconvenience, it is often owing to ourselves: for, independently of that moral discipline which all the prudent will exercise, we know that we are invested, at least on some occasions, with the faculty of alleviating or repressing the sources of uneasiness.

Numerous mental affections are not evidently referable in their outset to any of the stronger passions, nor necessarily productive of good or evil. Yet it is their moderation which disguises their origin, analogies, and consequences. Secrecy and curiosity have no apparent relation: but secrecy is the desire to conceal or aversion to disclose, and curiosity the desire to know: the one is a valuable property, which demands the aid of fortitude to render it availing; the other may hold a very different character, laudable when employed to enlarge the intellect, frequently most contemptible when

applied to meaner objects. Curiosity, supported by perseverance, has led to many precious results: but it has been also productive of mischief, and it has robbed numbers of their peace and reputation. The mental affections, besides, are immediately virtuous or vicious, a relative character that may be inverted by circumstances, firm in dispensing good, obdurate in resisting evil: the advocates of praise, the vehicles of censure: they lead to turbulence or quiescence, and when two of opposite descriptions meet, the one may neutralize the other. From all this it appears, that as none are hitherto agreed on the exact cause, the qualities, relation, or even the definition of the different mental excitements, we shall perhaps gain more by avoiding nice discriminations, than by attempting to rear precise theories.

It would be important to enquire how the passions are generated previous to experience, and what are those which are first manifested by mankind. Fear and anger, we affirm, are of the earliest demonstration. Possibly the mind may be affected by a secret awe, yet fear is chiefly derived from the sensation of suffering and the knowledge of injury; for it consists in alarm for the repetition of evil, rather than the dread of its first infliction. Why should evil be apprehended in ignorance of its reality? The animals of the earth themselves are tame when undisturbed. One who never had felt heat, or cold, or pain, could not conceive the im-

pressions to be imparted by them, more than he could anticipate the taste of a new substance, or the smart from a wound. Fear is the parent of caution; the timid look anxiously around that they may avoid suffering; and could we discover its origin, perhaps it would be found in having known danger. We are easily reminded by our sensibilities of the destructible materials composing the human frame: thence nature, in teaching her creatures caution, renders fear instrumental for self-preservation. But afterwards it comes to operate more extensively on our conduct: it is the great author of shame, the promoter of true piety, and it also inspires that false religion of the weak and the ignorant which the enlightened call superstition.

§ 1. *Anger*.—Mankind however, in every situation and at every period of life, seem much more readily excited to anger, and more easily brought under its dominion, than any other passion of the mind. It testifies a greater affinity to all the malevolent affections, and enters with less difficulty into an intimate union with them, than they do in their reciprocal attractions and combinations: Virtue derives less service from it than vice. Its frequency is so great, that it may be said never to have permanent rest; it is provoked by the slightest causes, nay, by those of which the spectator cannot form any estimate, from being hidden in the breast of him who labours under its agency. Before the in-

fantile judgment can discern between right and wrong, its violence discloses its abode, and after almost all the other passions capable of external excitation have subsided in age, anger may be still aroused. There is no action of another which may not give offence: there are no relative positions that may not occasion displeasure: there are no events that may not bring forth our resentments; and even before we take time to consider whether things could be otherwise. It is enough that they are as we see them, at the instant of our perceptions, sensations, or reflections.

When once the feeblest spark is kindled it blazes into the fiercest flame, laying reason prostrate, spreading desolation around it, and devouring all within reach of the ungovernable conflagration. How great the excesses, how horrible the cruelties, how lasting the miseries of which wrath has been productive! "Behold the perishing remains of cities—behold that solitude from which its inhabitants have fled;—anger has cast them down—anger has driven them away."* One short moment of heedless passion has given the signal for depopulating nations.

Some one gazes contemptuously on us: his gestures are provoking, he jostles us in the street. Prudence bids us disregard it, and advance on our way: should we stop to enquire if insult be designed,

* *Seneca de Ira*, lib. i. c. 2.

and endanger its aggravation by repetition? But we refrain from consulting prudence, wrath is excited, we allow ourselves to be hurried into the violence of passion: reproachful words stimulate our rage, and we resolve on vengeance: Not on that vengeance however which is commensurate to the incident; for even the most trivial is met with what is altogether inadequate. Our resentments always tend to exceed the measure corresponding to their cause. So immediate is our loss of self-command, and so feebly do we contend for dominion over our passions, that the profitable use of all is utterly inverted, and it is they which render us their sport, and hold us in subjugation. Thus exasperation from whatever source, as well as its consequences, is seldom justifiable. The cause is too weak, the effects are too strong: our judgment is disturbed. Is it not more expedient to pass on and forget the look of contempt, to conclude that the rude shock was unintentional, than to turn in effervescence and begin the broil? A little reflection will pacify us for the one, a little foresight might have shunned the other. Also we often take that mistaken view of circumstances which leads to censure the same breach of duty in others which we palliate in ourselves. Is not our own serious omission, that against which we were bound to have provided, sometimes accompanied by only a transient sensation, while the trivial errors of another call down a shower of vengeance on his head! This evinces how excessive

are the exactions of mankind, that they impose unreasonable obligations, and expect performances which are not due, while they tacitly hold themselves exempted.

It may be thence discovered how vain it would be to attempt the definition of anger itself, the numeration of its causes, or an explanation of the circumstances wherein it may not be excited. But it appears to be more consistent to define its source as “a condition which does not meet our approbation,” than to admit that its essential and fundamental cause is the collision between the contempt of others, and the self-love which we entertain, for this is too confined a sense.* Nor is it sufficiently distinguished as “a movement of the sensitive appetite seeking vengeance for an outrage,”† or “a propensity to occasion evil to another upon apprehension of an injury done by him.”‡ Personal offences indeed are the readiest to arouse our wrath: there is something immediately in view, the offender or his injury. Nevertheless, the mere subsistence of that condition, which does not meet our approbation in the arrangement of inanimate things without any visible agent, is alike effectual. Neither is an immediate external impression required; for the busy work of imagi-

* *Reynolds* on the Passions and Faculties of the Soul, p. 317.

† *Senault* De L'usage des Passions, Part II. Traité v. Discours 1. p. 390.

‡ *Hutcheson*, Essay on the Passions and Affections, Treat. I. Sect. 8.

nation will conjure up a series of crosses and contradictions which never had existence, but productive of sensations as disagreeable as if they had been real; and we are as much pained by these mental transitions as by the act of some great offender. Habitual indulgence of a fretful disposition prepares us for greater susceptibilities, and at length that capricious frame of temper ensues which puts an evil interpretation on every thing.

Thus we behold individuals characterized by excessive irritability, whom it is hazardous to approach on any occasion, or to engage in any topic; and it is still more unwise to encounter them in argument. We never are secure of avoiding offence.

Such an imperfection is commonly designed bad temper or ill-nature, but often unjustly so; for it is equally owing to physical or moral causes.*

Anger, as it arises from different sources, is attended by different sensations; and its effects, when unconstrained, therefore, are exceedingly various, both in degree and extremity. The resentment kindled by corporeal suffering, the rage from jealousy at the infidelity of one beloved, the indignation excited at the wounded honour of our family, though all productive of a thirst for revenge, have

* *Abul Fazel*, in his *Treatise on Hindostan*, says, the natives affirm that there are eight causes of anger: 1. Deprivation of riches; 2. Ingratitude; 3. Betraying a secret; 4. Neglecting a faithful servant; 5. Abusive language; 6. Unjust suspicion; 7. Murder; 8. Censoriousness. *Ayeen Akbery*, vol. iii. p. 194.

no analogy of feeling. Neither can we compare to any of them the anger against an impostor who has rendered us his dupe; or that with which we behold an unworthy rival who triumphs over our laudable pretensions; or the scorn excited by an act of meanness in those with whom we deal. Each offence against rectitude elicits a different species of anger; or a complication of passions, according as it meets the sentiment ready to resist it: and in this manner perhaps the original distinctive characteristics of the passions are lost.

The anger which is betrayed by sudden gusts of outrageous fury, rendering one alike regardless of his actions and of himself, urges to instant violence. But as an avowed enemy is not so dangerous as a hidden foe, the loud charge of passion is often less to be dreaded than the sullen broodings of silent resentment, contemplating distant mischief. Treachery can lurk among smiles: So was the apparent suavity of Geta more pregnant with evil than his open wrath; for caresses seemed to be lavished most on those whom he devoted to destruction. *

Transports of rage at slight provocations, appear so unreasonable and absurd, that they raise our astonishment or disgust, rather than a corresponding emotion: We are disposed to treat them with ridicule, for they make a man ridiculous. Their first ebullition, though never free from danger, is gener-

* *Ælius Spartianus*, Antoninus Geta, in fine.

ally their most offensive part; for their subsidence is as speedy as their excitation.*

Yet how hideous is the aspect which ungovernable passion puts on man! how frantic and terrible is he under its pernicious influence! His brain is on fire. Behold his countenance, it is distorted; his limbs tremble; a discordant voice issues from his breast; he is universally convulsed. "The same as the deformity of the external picture may the inward mind be conceived. Did not it break forth in impetuosity, it would terminate in destruction. Such is the appearance which enemies or wild beasts revelling in slaughter assume—such the infernal monsters whom fancy can figure."† Then is reason totally bewildered. As terror rivets us to the spot, or striving to fly we know not whither, so do we strike we know not where; nor can we distinguish friend from foe. Let an interval elapse—the mist is dispelled—things appear in their own relation: the magnitude of the danger, the extent of the injury, become duly appreciated: reason regaining her empire, contributes to the restoration of tranquillity. What then is the retrospect? Eternal repentance for inflicting an evil which admits of no reparation; or rejoicing that, amidst the furious impulse, we have been withheld from some horrid deed.

* *Descartes* les Passions de l'Ame, Art. 201.

† *Seneca* de Ira, lib. iii. cap. 35.

Resentment moves to vengeance, which would be vented even on inanimate objects were they thought capable of suffering; and probably it is only experience that exempts them, for before determining the effects of our wrath, we have discovered that our attempts to injure were vain.

But here does an interesting enquiry obtrude itself. If we believe that none of the arrangements of the universe are nugatory; that all have a reciprocal relation or correspondence, what is the original purpose of anger? We say that perhaps we could not enjoy the same properties which are gifted to us, were our susceptibilities withdrawn. Our personal structure is so frail and perishable, that it is readily injured, and existence is easily destroyed. The heat of the fire forbids us to approach too near; plunging into the watery element, soon gives us warning that it is not adapted for life. Contemplating those who derive their being from us, we see them weak and helpless, incapable of aiding themselves for a certain period, and trusting to others for succour. Having suffered from inanimate objects, we can avoid them again: But it seems as if nature, knowing the tenderness and delicacy of the frame, has provided for our safety in the sudden excitation of resentment, to deter the commission of injuries upon it. Could aggressions be repeated with impunity, we might quickly perish under them: were we callous to the offences against our innocent offspring, their imbecility would ex-

pose them to perpetual injury. If man be not cruel by nature, regarding which we shall afterwards enter on some investigation, he is universally disposed to domineer and exterminate ; and he must be resisted. Where there are no laws to restrain him, a stranger soon learns from anger that he may not offend with impunity : he suffers in return, he recoils, he abstains, and he is more wary in future. Thus it seems as if anger were a natural defence for protecting the human race. Having quitted the original state, the circumstances where it shall prove of its pristine utility are of more rare occurrence, nor are they alike obvious. But denying it this purpose, what other province shall we assign to it? where shall we find a satisfactory cause, why we are unceasingly susceptible of a passion alienating reason, transforming our kind to demons ; for “ anger does more than make men irrational, it makes them enemies to reason ?”

Sometimes physical causes predispose us to anger : we are pained and distressed by irritability : they vanish, and our placidity is restored. Sometimes an untoward fortune sours the temper, or even a train of trifling annoyances renders us irascible to our worthiest friends. There is besides a morbid sensibility ready to misconstrue the slightest incidents to offence, and to put an evil interpretation on the fountain of goodness itself. Possibly this originates in a proud and haughty spirit, looking to a higher reward and consideration than it

receives; for surely it is no characteristic of the meek and humble; nor can we say that it is a concomitant of superior virtue. Those who think the highest of themselves, must meet the most frequent mortifications. Ordinary intercourse with the world shews that there are persons of such delicate sensibility, that however cautious our conduct it is difficult to shun offence. They seem ever prepared to take it. We all expect a great deal more indeed than is our due, and the want of accustomed deference, or of a little attention, is as keenly felt at the moment as the want of friendship or gratitude. But the morbid sensibility of some persons to every thing, is as injurious to themselves as it is painful to their companions, and it is often very absurdly displayed. A remarkable instance of this was seen in the history of a young Hessian of respectable parentage, named Francis David Stirn, who was born about the year 1735. Having made rapid progress in his literary acquirements, and become master of several elegant accomplishments, the invasion of his country obliged him to seek subsistence in London. There he officiated for some time occasionally as a clergyman, and afterwards was received into the family of a surgeon, where he gave instructions to the females in music. Stirn shewed himself of a jealous and suspicious temper, and endowed with extraordinary sensibility as to his condition, which construed unmeaning words and occurrences into reflections on himself. Accidentally finding a few

pieces of bread, rendered him furious, from believing they were purposely exposed as reproachful emblems of that poverty which obliged him to subsist on bounty. The peace of the family required that he should quit the house, when new chimeras of indignity arose. He did so; but finding his patron elsewhere next day in a convivial party, he suddenly reached a deadly weapon across the table, and bereft him of life. *

Feelings too delicate and refined are ill adapted to social intercourse, where many rude shocks must be suffered: They expose us to mortifications and wounds innumerable, and they lead us into many inconsistencies.

The importance of resisting the first impressions of anger, and the means of abating its influence, are no trivial considerations; for our susceptibility of it, the odious aspect it puts upon us, and its terrible consequences, have rendered it equally dreaded and abhorred by mankind. As it is the readiest, the most powerful, and dangerous affection of the mind, to gain a victory over it is as if conquering a formidable enemy.

But the greatest difficulty consists in the discovery and acknowledgment of our imperfections. The passionate are not conscious of their proneness to violence, nor the morose that they are repulsive.

* *Trials at the Old Bailey*, vol. xv. No. 261. for 1760. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xxx. p. 399. for 1760.

Who is it that ventures to hold up the mirror to reflect his own faults? Still there are some who cannot disguise them from themselves. They behold the effects, and search out the cause. Claudius the Roman emperor, "knowing his irascibility and resentment, palliated both by an edict, promising that the one should be short and innocent, and that the other should not be unjust." *

It is by admitting the access of the passions, by allowing them a lodgement in the mind, that we endanger ourselves. Giving way to the slighter impressions of anger, they are encouraged, and fanned, and fomented, until blazing forth in fury. But if we close the door to their entrance, or even after admission we make a vigorous exertion to preserve the mastery over our propensities, they remain innocuous in their subjugation. Though mankind in general be ireful, some are surprisingly tranquil and placid. They listen to taunts, and allow provocations which seem beyond endurance, and the best calculated to make them boil with rage. The look of contempt, reproachful invectives, contumely or calumny, are all offered in vain. It is not, perhaps, that their sensibilities are blunter, that they do not feel there is an offence, but having gained a greater ascendancy over themselves, they refrain from resenting it. Likewise there may be some who, conscious of their integrity, despise the

* *Suetonius in vita Tiberii Claudii Cæsaris*, § 38.

assaults which are made upon it, from knowing them to be false. Daily experience shews, that the most immoderate in anger are the least apprehensive of its injuring them. They indulge in its excesses from trusting to impunity : they are cowardly in their wrath. The violence of passion, indeed, bewilders reason, but how rarely are its lower stages manifested, where more vehement retaliation may be provoked. Men never condemn their fellows to punishment, if that punishment be to recoil immediately on themselves : They measure the hazard and proportion of retaliation ; they watch the time when their resolve may be fulfilled in inflicting the sentence with safety. Thus it is evident if apprehensions regarding the issue prove a restraint, we have the power of confining ourselves within the bounds of moderation. Assuredly it is not of greater difficulty to look forward to dreaded injury from our own conduct, than to repress the conduct which is to bring us into hazards. It is in the beginning, however, that we must be resolute against taking offence ; for every passion being weakest in its origin, holds us in the slenderest bonds, and is the most easily subdued. But unlike many others which are slowly evolved, and gradually brought to maturity, the seeds of anger are instantly sown and quickly ripen ; indulgence strengthens its roots, and as a nourishing soil forbids their decay.—Neither, like some of the most vehement, as love, or jealousy, or hatred, kindling from a spark and progressively

glowing to fury, does anger always require feeding to foment it: the flash and the explosion are almost simultaneous. We are at once overpowered, we take no interval to pause on its expediency, we blindly obey its dictates, without considering that, if ever commendable, it can only be when resulting from a proper cause, when directed to proper objects, when moderate in degree, and limited in duration. *

If we be not invested with the faculty of repressing our wrath in its commencement, we and those around us may tremble for the consequences; and the counsel of moralists proves abortive. But the most violent passions consume themselves, which renders the spectator careful of fanning the embers, or of adding fuel to the flame: and after an interval, long or short, their subsidence replaces tranquillity. Of all the remedies for anger, therefore, we must come to the opinion of Seneca, that the most potent is delay. † The protraction of time alone will assuage and obliterate it. The fainter the impression it may last the longer, for it is not so readily consumed; the stronger the hold it is more hostile to external influence. If at the moment of suffering pain or injustice, the mind could be entirely diverted from either, the sense of both would be enfeebled: and could it be kept long enough en-

* *Aristotle* Ethic. lib. iv: cap. 5.

† *Seneca* de Ira, lib. ii. cap. 28.

gaged, the original impression undoubtedly never would be renewed: the recollections of it would abate. This kind of mental alienation from the immediate excitements of passion, is most effectually calculated for their repression and obliteration. Hence the reflecting have held, that the best method of subduing the passions, is to employ those which are the most under our controul, against those which are the most rebellious. *

The author of these pages has known individuals, indeed such may be known to many, who became habitually enraged at causes imperceptible to the bystander; but being totally disregarded by those whom perhaps they might have provoked, composure was soon restored. Persons also are seen who are placid to the whole world, one or two excepted, whose simple appearance seems to kindle their wrath, and it vanishes as they retire. The far greater number, however, are not so easily appeased; they cherish their resentment until it can be poured forth on some devoted head: too often the weak or unresisting suffer; those whom we have in our power, and who cannot, or dare not, retaliate. Such is the domestic tyrant, one who, smooth and complacent in the public eye, mercilessly domineers over his own dependant family in private. Such the avaricious miser, who strives to enrich himself by stimulating the la-

* *Senault* L'Usage des Passions, Part. I. Traité iii. Discours 2. p. 110.

bour of others: whose imagination, heated by the love of gold, outstrips the faculties of man, and gives an outlet to his ire. A little reflection would remind the protector that his duty is protection, and would avert the indignation of the master by disclosing the feebleness or incapacity which aroused it. The cause is odious, the object is unjustifiable.

The least culpable are often the least qualified to fulfil our expectations, however reasonable: but frequently being unreasonable, we resolve to extort fulfilment previous to ascertaining their capacity. Then do we storm, falsely concluding our displeasure lawful. The briefest interval would persuade us to absolve them; to distinguish between real and imaginary insult; to discover who is unwilling, or weak, or weary.

Besides, it manifests a discreditable want of energy to admit the inroads and instant mastery of anger; for the mind is a fortress which should be impregnable to feeble assaults. It is given as the means of governing, not to be governed.

Is it not remarkable, amidst the reprehension bestowed on anger, that so eminent a philosopher as Aristotle, he who of all others has beheld human nature in its justest light, should consider incontinence of anger a lesser deformity than incontinence as to pleasure.* Surely he has overlooked that it is an ingredient mixed up with many other bane-

* *Aristotle Ethic. lib. vii. c. 6.*

ful passions, that its first impulse contemplates injury, while pleasure, notwithstanding its selfishness, involves evil only as a secondary or subsidiary means to accomplish gratification. Incontinence of anger besides is the more dangerous, as it has no definite limits; incontinence as to pleasure exhausts itself in its excesses. Unless in the instinctive movements of infancy, in quest of a satisfactory state, in appeasing hunger, or seeking a genial temperature, or similar sensations, a considerable time elapses before the studied pursuit of pleasure begins. This period is long anticipated by many shades and species of resentment; and after the taste for every pleasure is eradicated, anger has still to subside. It is difficult also to admit, that mercy and kindness are earlier among mankind than wrath and revenge; for no prominent difference is here recognized between the savage and civilized condition; or if it be, it is to the disadvantage of the former. But amidst the exertions of labour and the depressions of care, men undoubtedly are not so irascible as amidst comforts, ease, and indolence. Hardships tame them. Therefore anger is more the vice of the fortunate, the great, and the opulent.

Nature having invested us with anger as a kind of defensive armour to deter the injurious from aggressions, and thus to be the remote means of self-preservation, we should be necessarily endowed with something subsequent to simple irritation to fulfil her purpose: This is resentment. No sooner does

the offender strike than thirst for vengeance follows; no sooner is the wound discovered than it must be alleviated by offering its counterpart. Injury, resentment, revenge, are the eventful transitions of a moment.

§ 2. *Renenge.*—But here are the wise arrangements designed to regulate the universe explained, though mankind violate their true proportion. What can be so equitable a principle as retaliation? that exactly what is given shall be returned, and the due equilibrium preserved. Is it not inconsistent with those feelings whereon the grand pillar of justice is founded, that offences shall be offered with impunity; that vice shall trample on virtue, and be patiently borne? If mankind be not restrained by legislative controul, or if the bonds uniting society be not its protection, individuals must avenge themselves as if there were neither. They will do so; for whatever precept may inculcate, the forgiveness of wilful injury is adverse to human nature, and hence are men so prone to revenge. We should be divested of all sensibility should we cease desiring the retaliation of injuries, or abstain from precipitate vengeance: for those who are not alive to wrongs unprovoked, who do not feel the wounds they receive, are unqualified to repel injury, and at length they will tamely brook indignity. Were they unsheltered, aggression would be heaped on aggression; danger and destruction

would ensue. But resentment warning the offender, he finds that retaliation may follow, whence we discover that it is a principle approved of and dictated by nature. Its utility is most evident: it preserves the weak from the oppression of the strong: it is the source of justice and equity, and the origin of law; for without recurring to more subtile reasons, men bind themselves to make a common cause against the injurious, purposely to avoid the disorder that would be concomitant on each individual avenging himself.

Vengeance being always in ready preparation, shews the benefit of self-controul: nothing averts it unless contempt shall undervalue the offence, time obliterate its impression, or having another defender in whom to confide. Then do we refuse obedience to the internal monitor, and listen to prudent dissuasions against returning the malevolence of the wicked, by treating them as they treat the rest of mankind.*

But wanting other safeguards, the privilege of retaliation proves our protection; nor can any thing be so just and appropriate as the due proportion of punishment in commensurating an offence:—An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, suffering for suffering. It is injury which points out our enemy,—none has a right to wound without expecting a wound in return; and if abandoned to fate, our

* *Antoninus Meditationes*, lib. vii. § 66.

feebleness be overcome, we seek the dispensing justice of a higher power in avenging our cause. "Then Pertinax having invoked Jove the Avenger, he covered his head with his robe, and was slain." *

Happy it is that mankind can trust in such a resource. Where the wicked escape the reward of their demerits for the time, we are wont to ascribe the penalties afterwards overtaking them, to the just retribution of offended Providence: thus believing that the wrongs of mankind shall be vindicated in due season, while the vicious are taught to dread the exactions of atonement.

The ancients, like the modern idolatrous nations, pictured the Goddess of Revenge with wings, to denote her celerity in pursuing offenders. They erected temples and offered sacrifices to her, and held festivals in remembrance of the dead when she was invoked, that they might be still justified through her interposition. †

Although the love of vengeance be natural, and the law of retaliation, its immediate exhibition, be most just, we are to abide strictly within its limits in being our own avengers, and carefully avoid transgressing in an opposite extreme. Satisfied with conquest, we must spare our fallen enemy:

* *Julius Capitolinus* Pertinax imperator, cap. 2.

† *Pausanias*, lib. i. c. 30. *Ammianus Marcellinus*, lib. iv. in fine. Nemesis the Angel of Justice: *Plato de Legibus*, lib. iv.

It is mean to insult his inanimate remains :

*Corpora magnanimo satis est prostrasse Leoni
Pugna summi finem cum jacet hostis, habet.*

OVID. *Tristia*, lib. iii, eleg. 5.

Revenge is one of the first principles influencing the actions of mankind, and from it is the law of retaliation recognized by the rudest tribes, as it also regulates the manners of those in the highest civilization. The children of the New Hollanders retaliate a push with a push, and their parents retaliate blood with blood.

Mankind however allow their feelings to gain too early a mastery over them to preserve the exact measure of retaliation ; and the sudden gusts of passion stimulate to excessive and indiscriminate vengeance. Therefore were not the violence to recur upon ourselves, or to manifest its own absurdity, we should not spare inanimate objects. Nay, we actually witness the ungovernable rage of some persons, in reducing every thing to a wreck around them ; and that mankind have a propensity to injure even inanimate objects in retaliation, is actually exemplified by some analogous facts in real life. Among a savage, barbarous, and vindictive tribe inhabiting northern India, if one of the number be killed by falling from a tree, the survivors cut it down, and whatever be its size they convert it to chips, which are scattered to the wind. Further, should one of them become the prey of a tiger, the whole tribe is up in arms, and the family of the de-

ceased remain in disgrace, until, by destroying the animal, they can give a feast of its flesh.* The laws of the Jews decreed the destruction of the ox goring a man or a woman to death, but prohibited the flesh to be eaten. It is said that, in the year 1814, a bull which had killed a man in France was condemned, on the deposition of witnesses, to be hanged, and the sentence of the lower court confirmed by Parliament.† The former are the principles of retaliation in their earliest known stages. Their design coincides however with those more refined enactments regulating the punishment of offenders, by manifesting the only vengeance that can be obtained. First, an individual avenges himself; next, having perished, he is avenged by his surviving relatives, or his countrymen commit his cause to a common vindicator; so that “the avenger of blood shall surely slay the murderer when he meeteth him.”‡

* *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 189. The Kookies or Lunctas.

† Instances of sentence on animals are very rare, whether from raising them too nearly to the predicament in which mankind may be placed, or from some other reason. It is commonly believed, that a shepherd's dog having accompanied his master through a flock of sheep during the day, sagaciously understood the signs given him to return and carry them off at night; and that the master being condemned to death for notorious offences of this description, the poor animal, which deserved a better fate, was sentenced by the same judges to be hanged along with him. The author has been unable to retrace either anecdote to its source.

‡ The interpretation of this passage of Scripture is not free

The maxim of retaliation is precise in requiring breach for breach, or stripe for stripe, and that "whoso sheddeth man's blood by man his blood shall be shed." The punishment is to correspond to the injury: it ceases to be retaliation where exceeding it. But the evil itself may be aggravated by the mode in which it is offered: therefore the punishment is not to be so restricted. Pursuing the genuine principles of equity, prudent legislators endeavour to make the penalty counterbalance the offence; unwise legislators know not to preserve the parity. Perhaps Solon did not exceed the exact measure of retributive justice, who ordered that man to be totally blinded who had deprived another of his only remaining eye. *

Public tranquillity demands that the retaliation of offences shall be wrested from the hands of the injured. It would be too dangerous to entrust it to themselves. If anger be so ready to swell into furious passion, and prompt us to immediate vengeance while the smart remains, it uniformly magnifies the wrong, and often mistakes the remedy. Sometimes inability to retaliate, exaggerates the offence, covers the sufferer with dishonour in his own eyes, and, amidst conflicting passions, leads him to its extenuation in suicide. Thus it is said of the Japanese, that no native is insulted without

of difficulty. Numbers, chap. xxxv. var. loc. may be compared with Deuteronomy, chap. xix. ver. 12.

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. i. § 57. in vita Solonis.

the blood of the aggressor expiating the injury, and in case he cannot have that satisfaction he kills himself. This spirit of vengeance extends even to females, who as well as the men constantly carry a dagger in their girdles, and employ it with the utmost coolness in their personal quarrels, not only against their enemies, but against their husbands and brothers, and even themselves.* But where the privilege of retaliation is withdrawn from the injured, the thirst for vengeance both has time to abate, and is partly effaced in the confidence of being avenged: nor can the injurer be exposed to a higher penalty than his crime demands.

All the rules for the government of society, however, are ineffectual, in altering human nature: the best and most wholesome enactments for the common good must leave something to be done by individuals on their own account, as still a better means of tranquillity than specific ordinances. Inalienable rights will sanction it. Although it be safe to withdraw the privilege of retaliation from the injured, and he shall have an option of avoiding its exactions, many cases may be figured which deny him this alternative, and imperiously demand that he shall vindicate himself. It is not always enough that he has society to hear his appeal, or to

* *Tavernier*, Relation of Japan, p. 5. *Titsingh*, History of Japan, quoted in *Reinegg's* General Description of Mount Caucasus, vol. i. p. 247. notes.—*Thunberg*, Voyages au Japon, tom. iii. p. 213. says, “I have never seen men so vengeful.”

interpose either the laws or the people for his protection. He must shew that he can be his own protector, that he entertains a refined feeling of honour which forbids endurance of insult; for endurance warrants repetition. Is it not evident that forbearance may encourage aggression, that becoming habitual it ceases to arouse a manly resistance, we tremble, and are disgraced? No regulations, however framed, can restrain the vicious equal to apprehension: nothing can so effectually curb the intemperate as the sense of immediate danger. True it is that no definite outrage subsists without a penalty attached to it, which we may struggle to exact; perhaps we may succeed: But if foiled in the attempt, the scorn is redoubled. How painful is the interval! Every eye turned upon us, some say we are right, others say we are wrong, many are in doubt; the very state of long protracted suspense blunts the acuteness of renewed indignity, and while most pernicious to reputation, familiarises the whole world with our suspected shame. The penalty at length obtained may be ruinous to the offender without affording any satisfaction to ourselves, without confirming our tottering place in society, without healing the deadly wound to our peace. What consolation can we reap from the fine of the unprincipled profligate, who has dishonoured a beloved wife, a sister, or a daughter? Can it restore our ruined peace, or wipe away the foul stain with which he has covered them for ever?

The public tranquillity demands forbearance, but the rules of social intercourse exact of us, that we shall stand forward to avenge ourselves, calling for a trespass on the laws that we may preserve our station. Of this we cannot free ourselves; it is vain to hope that any substitute will be accepted: for custom has not so far eradicated original principles as to esteem any compensation comparable to personal vengeance: and it is believed to be more consistent with a lofty sense of honour to efface the ignominy by seeking the life of the offender, though by the exposure of our own. This desperate alternative is not void of utility. Were it so, it would have been abandoned long ago: we may regret its subsistence, for we may regret the necessity of inflicting evil, even in retaliation: but, in general, the very circumstances by which it is brought about will repress it from being carried to extremities. It is not the result of a false and mistaken view of the indignity, nor peculiarly recognised by European nations from a chivalrous duty to display their courage; it seems to be an inherent part of the privilege of excluding strangers from an interference with what is more intimately connected with us than with them.

On the banks of the river Congo, an intrigue with the wife of a man in an ordinary station is a venial offence; but if the injured person be the son of a chief, he must expiate his wrongs by the life of the paramour. He cannot compromise his dis-

honour.* Among the mountain tribes of Nepaul, the men are propense to violent jealousy, and always prepared for vengeance, by carrying a weapon in their girdle: the point of honour demands that they shall never rest until they have shed the blood of the man who has been suspected of familiarities with their wives, and sometimes the opportunity is sought for years.†

Thus all civilized nations, and some which have yet to reach a polished state, recognise the right of taking vengeance: whence the social compact governing our intercourse, that which must be obeyed as paramount to every consideration, compels us to seek the destruction of men by whom our honour has been wounded. Sometimes, indeed, the issue is deplorable, and capricious destiny allows the fall of the injured to aggravate the crime of the offender. Yet, on the whole, it is a delicate question, whether this alternative in avenging all serious injuries of a peculiar character, be not productive of infinitely greater peace and tranquillity, and contributes more to the general benefit, and especially the safety of society, than if no such personal vindication were sanctioned. At least we cannot maintain the negative.

Surely human nature is very sanguinary, when so easily offended we encourage resentment and har-

* *Tuckey*, Narrative of the Expedition to the River Zaire, p. 163.

† *Hamilton*, Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul, p. 22.

hour implacable vengeance for years : and as if our reciprocal wrath against each other were not to be extinguished by mutual injury, that the feuds of our ancestors should descend to posterity. Smooth, mild, and complacent in appearance, we are easily exasperated, and impatient for revenge. When Hannibal, with puerile importunity, urged his father to be carried along with him to warfare, Hamilcar leading him to an altar, and causing him lay his hand on the consecrated victim, made him swear that he should be ever an enemy to the Roman people.* The warrior became true to his promise.

But to what does this extend unless to blood and slaughter,—the indulgence of implacable animosities for contemptible wrongs, and at last fomenting national hatred ? Besides, it is rather the mere gratification of revenge that is sought, than any observance of what is suitable to the injury.

An ancient king of Cyprus pounded a philosopher in a mortar, in resentment of a jest at his expense long antecedent to his attainment of that dignity.†

But the due retaliation of offence is different from so cruel and vindictive a temper ; and from that ferocious vengeance which substitutes one unresisting individual for the fault of another. The Locrians avenged the disgrace of their wives and daughters

* *Livy*, lib. xxi. cap. 1. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. ix. cap. 3.

† *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. ix. § 58. in vita Anaxarchi.

on the wife and daughters of Dionysius, because the author of their injuries was not himself in their power :* Alexander burnt the Palace of Persepolis because the Persians had formerly ravaged Greece ; and he massacred the innocent descendants of a Milesian colony, whose ancestors had destroyed a temple :† Nor did the high-priest of the Jews spare the vanquished chief of a tribe sprung of progenitors who several centuries anterior had opposed the progress of the Israelites.

Forgiveness, indeed, is attributable as much to fading remembrance of the injury, as to mildness and charity ; and thence is revenge so implacably cherished. If we feel the neglect of a friend, what kind of sensation must be inspired by the insult of an enemy ? or if we be covered by unmerited disgrace, what extremity will deter us from endeavouring to redeem ourselves by vengeance ?—A Spanish gentleman named Aguire having employed two Indians to carry his baggage, in contravention of an order by the governor of a city in South America, was sentenced by him to be mounted on an ass and ignominiously scourged in public : not although the citizens interposed to obtain the remission of such an inadequate punishment, and the gentleman implored that he should rather suffer

* *Strabo*, lib. vi. tom. i. p. 397. edit. 1707, in folio. *Ælian* *Varie Historiæ*, lib. viii. cap. 8.

† *Quintus Curtius*, lib. vii. cap. 5. *Strabo*, lib. xv. tom. ii. p. 1061.

death, was it abated. Aguire esteeming himself eternally disgraced, retired from the military service, and patiently awaited the expiry of the governor's appointment; when he followed him incessantly as his shadow. The governor, warned of his danger, armed himself in mail, and hurried from place to place in quest of safety. But no sooner had he hopes of rest, than he found his implacable enemy treading on his footsteps. He fled again; and again Aguire pursued him. Thus did three years elapse, while many hundred miles were traversed by both. At last Aguire ventured to enter the governor's house, and finding him asleep in an inner chamber, he pierced him with a dagger where unprotected by his armour.* The Italians are said to be extremely vengeful; perhaps their numerous sanctuaries, and the privilege of absolution, favour their designs; and if it be so, they can gratify resentment in safety. An Englishman is known to have lately followed his opponent to India, where discovering he had embarked for his own country, he immediately returned, and from Britain sought him on the continent of Europe. Still more lately an officer lost his life for some slighting expressions, apparently used without design, in another country, and forgot by him during an interval of years. We call ourselves the most Christian and humane—the best of people!

* *Garcilasso de la Vega*, Royal Commentaries of Peru, B. vi. ch. 18.

But there are entire tribes whose character is “never to forgive, or let an injury go unrevenged :” Of those on the western coast of Africa, in general, it is said, “forgiveness of injuries they conceive incompatible with the nature of man.” * Nor do they prove mistaken judges of our real disposition, if our placidity depends more on our self-command or insensibility of wrong, than our readiness to pardon. Should one of the Feloops be slain in a sudden affray, his eldest son wears his sandals ever after on the anniversary of his death, until an occasion of avenging it offers: thus perpetuating remembrance of the offence by a symbol. † If one of the Washington islanders falls by the hands of another, the whole family of the deceased unite against the offender: an open strife commences, which continues uninterrupted until he or one of his kinsmen perish. But a single victim of any age or either sex is sufficient, when the enmity ceases, and harmony is restored among the antagonists. ‡ So it is on the banks of the Congo,

* *Corry on the Windward Coast of Africa*, p. 63.

† Feloops, Fellups, or Floops; *Park, Travels in the Interior of Africa*, p. 15. *Moore, Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa*, p. 26. *Golberry*, one of the most philosophical writers on this continent, considers this savage, melancholy, and taciturn tribe, very different from the surrounding people. He estimates their number at about 50,000. *Fragmens d'un Voyage*, tom. ii. p. 413.

‡ *Langsdorff, Voyages and Travels*, vol. i. p. 132.

where, if the injured husband cannot reach the paramour himself, his wrath may be appeased, and the stain obliterated, with the life of a relative. The natural desire of retaliation, however, begets new contentions, the kindred of the deceased now seek new revenge, and their district is involved in perpetual animosities. Such feuds are so common among the Washington islanders, or so consistent with their feelings and fashions, that spectators contemplate the mutual hostilities with indifference, and without attempting to interfere. In the country of Albania, situated in the south-east extremities of Europe, the inhabitants are "distinguished, even in a land of barbarians, for the singular cruelty and implacability of their dispositions:" A murderer is pursued by the family of the deceased; neither time nor future benefits can obliterate the injury, which can only be expiated by the blood of the offender, or of one of his kin. The enmity spreads from families to towns, and from towns to districts, and should any one wander beyond the bounds of protection, he would be assassinated without seeing his foe. *

In this manner the peace and security of tribes, or their families, once infringed, may be disturbed during generations for a single offence.

Mankind emerging from barbarism affect a proud

* *Hobhouse, Journey through Albania, Letter 14, vol. i. p. 166.*

independence, which is to be maintained only by that intimate union rendering the injury of one an offence against all. While retainers serve their chief, they shelter themselves under his banner, and trust to his protection from their enemies : and his power, on the other hand, constitutes the most effectual claim on their allegiance.

Of old, in the northern parts of these kingdoms, the chief who found himself in possession of a certain territory, called on those of his name to support him in his hostile projects, or to join in his defence : he gave them protection as a reward for their servility, and dealt out a kind of arbitrary justice, such as they were forced to be content with, for they could obtain none elsewhere. The whole together formed a great lawless predatory gang, whose security resulted from mutual fidelity, whose interests were rivetted in making a common cause, whence a petty warfare sometimes was waged to vindicate the wrongs of an individual. It would be erroneous to believe this custom peculiar to Britain. Perhaps it was better characterized from the chief and his band bearing a common name ; thus affording a more decided presumption of kindred and alliance, than if that distinction had not been known. But tribes, their subdivision into clans, and of clans into families,—the worst and most pernicious arrangement of society—is universal. Wherever it subsists it opposes civilization, and it is alike destructive of peace and justice in a nation, as well as the nursery of pride

and of rapine. Can they be called prudent who would encourage such an order of things?—What was its consequence of old? While other kingdoms advanced, the north remained stationary: some patriarchal virtues possibly were preserved, but the qualities most conspicuous were derived from that condition least adapted to improvement,—arbitrary rule and insecurity. Those peculiarities which we would now persuade ourselves to behold with interest, lowered the reputation of the tribes exhibiting them, because they were productive of what all rational mankind must consider vice. The Scottish Highlanders were not to be appeased by moderate vengeance; for their enmities were sometimes transmitted with inheritance; they thought it right that slaughter should be retaliated by slaughter, and to avenge conflagrations by fire.* Their contemporaries were wont to allege, in emphatic charges, that ‘it is well known in Scotland how insatiable is the passion of ire, and the appetite of revenge; for their deadly feud will never be quenched but with the blood of all their enemies and adherents.’† It was actually so. The government was disturbed by rebellious chiefs, incessant turbulence disquieted the people, and hostile clans fought for extirpation. They suffocated troops of their enemies to death with smoke

* *Barclay Satyricon*, p. 392. This work was published first in the early part of the reign of Charles I.

† *Wright on the Passions of the Mind in General*, p. 72. Published in 1619.

in caverns, or burnt one another during divine service in churches, while their barbarous music drowned the cries of the miserable victims. Hence the encouragement of ferocity in time of war, the idleness and inactivity concomitant on peace, and the languid advances of those useful arts demanding exertion. Let rulers beware of favouring clanships. No distribution of society can be more inconsistent with the precautions of a wise administration, and the public tranquillity. As imperfections are obscured by distance, and vices may be construed into virtues by reciprocations and embellishment, so may we select a few interesting features in framing histories from ancient materials. Our attention is excited alike by prominent qualities and prominent defects; therefore the noted fidelity and courage of mountain tribes struggling to preserve their independence, rising in revolt under their chiefs, retreating amidst their fastnesses for safety, are held as glorious properties, until recollecting their descents to ravage the plains, to plunder the defenceless, and mingle in blood and slaughter. High coloured exaggeration has given them a greater interest of late than the real importance of the subject demands: and the proximity of times and places, together with the contrast of sudden changes, have thrown far more valuable incidents in the shade.

The feuds of the Highland clans disturbed the peace and safety of all within their immediate sphere; but it does not appear that warfare was renewed

in remembrance of ancient injuries.—A tribe inhabits the Caucasian mountains, among the families of which revenge seems to be perpetuated forever,—where no concessions can obtain forgiveness, nor any retaliation can terminate the strife. Yet the right of reprisals may be deferred by presents or money, though it be imperative on the offended family ultimately to demand satisfaction alternately even to the thousandth generation, according to their mode of expression. Notwithstanding the parties thus situated exhibit no external signs of hostility, the person on whom the duty rests secretly watches an opportunity to sacrifice the devoted victim. Of this a remarkable example is given in a history of those regions, also illustrating the general correspondence of the manners and customs of mountaineers. One of the tribe being assassinated in the year 1759, it was not until nine years later that the offender fell by the hands of his eldest son Ahmed. The only child of the deceased was immediately taken under the protection of this avenger, brought up with his own family, enjoyed the same affection, held the same place in paternal regard, and in maturer age he was invested with all the property which his father had left. Nevertheless, neither gifts nor protection had paid the price of blood; for he confessed to Dr Reineggs, the author of the history; that he entertained an ardent desire for an opportunity of fulfilling the melancholy duty incumbent on him of sacrificing his

foster father : and that gratitude only, and exposure to retaliation from Ahmed's sons, deterred him. Before he could accomplish his design, he fell in a contest with another tribe in the year 1789. But his father not having been avenged, the duty of doing so descended, along with his property, to a cousin, from whom Ahmed for years afterwards still endeavoured to gain indemnity by presents and other conciliatory tokens ; nor did he ever venture to pass the boundaries of his village without a sufficient guard.* Even this hereditary spirit of vengeance is greatly inferior to what subsisted among more ancient nations ; as the Jews revenged offences offered several centuries previously to their forefathers. Among some it is now held incumbent to pacify the wandering spirits of fallen friends, which cannot otherwise find repose than by the death of their enemies.†

Tribes in their progress to civilization, as well as those attaining it, deem themselves bound in duty and honour to vindicate the wrongs of their families. Likewise it came to be thought discreditable not to avenge very slight offences. Those abandoning a feud were met by penalties : sometimes depriving them of the right of succession, as by the ancient laws of France : ‡ and single combat for a

* *Reineggs*, Description of Mount Caucasus, vol. i. p. 246.
The tribe of Ossi or Ossetes.

† *Adair*, History of the American Indians, p. 151.

‡ *Lex Salica*, Tit. 23. De eo qui se de Parentilla tollere vult.
Vide *Eccardus* Leges Francorum Salicæ et Ripuariorum, p. 108. 135. 162.

long time, instead of being repressed, was promoted. The Deity was believed to favour justice by admitting of victory; and the vanquished was held to be guilty wherever the circumstances were clouded by doubt. If defeated and overthrown, he might be dragged by the vindictive avengers to the most ignominious death.* Men were encouraged to shed each others blood by the levity of public opinion, rather than taught mercy, compassion, and forgiveness; or it was judged a necessity with which the honourable could not dispense. Religious ceremonies purified the combatants, as if sanctioning their reciprocal design of slaughter. In the space of seventeen or eighteen years, it appears that, about the reign of Henry IV. of France, at least seven or eight thousand gentlemen had fallen in duels.† There indeed this mode of avenging real injuries or wounded honour was carried to a sanguinary extent; and high-spirited persons combated in parties, the seconds becoming principals on the occasion with each other reciprocally. They seem to have met with the determination to destroy. Thus in the year 1652, two parties of five, headed by the Dukes of Beaufort and de Nemours, fought with different

* *Le Laboureur*, Histoire de Charles VI. Liv. vi. ch. 10. gives an instance of this, where the combat was fought in presence of the king, his court, and a great multitude of people. The accused was vanquished.

† *St Foix*, Essais Historiques sur Paris, tom. i. p. 248.

lethal weapons at Paris, when the latter and two of his seconds were killed, and the others wounded.* At length the fashion became so greatly abused, that men at peace with all the world were found ready to embark in the quarrel of others, or to offer themselves as avengers. It is said that the last instance of express permission by the King of France, was given in the year 1547, when one of the combatants fell in his presence;† after which period, capricious enactments took an opposite turn, as in other European states: But the custom of personal vengeance has been felt to be in such consistency with our feelings, and founded on such deep-rooted principles of human nature, that it has been only discountenanced, never eradicated.

Pictures of the earlier stages of society come nearer to the true disposition of mankind in exhibiting it the least disguised. Regulations for the peace of society wisely prohibit its infringement in the personal vindication of wrongs, which often may be imaginary: but notwithstanding laws be contrived for our protection, and be open for our redress, their benefit is contemned in our ardour to avenge an injury.

* *Madame de Montpensier*, Memoires, tom. ii. p. 142. says, the cause of dispute was about their precedence.

† *Castelnau*, Memoires: Additions, tom. ii. p. 552. The challenger was accompanied to the field by his second, and about 300 of his company, all clad in white and carnation, with heralds, drums, and trumpets.

If vengeance was impracticable at the moment, some, in the heat of their passion, have vowed never to rest satisfied until it were gratified. The African wears his father's sandals on the anniversary of his death, to remind him of the injury : symbols awaken the wrath which the failure of recollection might allow to be obliterated. Civilis, the Batavian, cut his hair only when he had vanquished the enemies of his country :* A desperate band of 6000 Saxons surviving a battle, vowed that they would preserve their beards and their hair until they should be avenged of the Suevi.† When two noblemen, Count Egmont and Count Horn, suffered death in the year 1568 in the Netherlands, the public indignation was such that some individuals vowed not to touch their hair until these illustrious victims had been vindicated : and in Britain, so lately as the reign of Charles I. a few loyal adherents to his family made similar vows ; nor is it unlikely that they are known in all countries. ‡

* *Tacitus*, *Historiæ*, lib. i. c. 59. lib. iv. c. 61.

† The Saxons returning to their own country, found it occupied by the Suevi and other nations, with whom they were unwilling to share it. A sanguinary battle ensued, wherein thousands fell. *Paulus Diaconus* de *Gestis Longobardorum*, lib. iii. c. 7. *Gregorius Turonensis*, *Historia Francorum*, lib. v. § 15. et *Epitome*, § 76.

‡ Osman Bey Bardissi, at the head of the Mamelukes, "made a vow never to shave either his head or his beard till he should re-enter Cairo in triumph." *Legh*, *Narrative of a Journey in Egypt*, p. 168.

Innumerable phrases are preserved in every language apparently unmeaning, and of which our ignorance in history precludes the explanation. We torture words to interpret them : and establish etymologies which have no foundation in truth. Some of these pertain to the earlier stages of uncultivated man, and denote his ferocious nature, his thirst for slaughter, and the readiness with which he imbrued his hands in blood. We conceive them to be simply allegorical, though perhaps indicating the real and cannibal practice of savages. Illustrations of the fact may be found elsewhere: they may be even traced to the cruel vengeance in which our own forefathers indulged their passions. It is expressly told, for instance, of the defenders, that "several of them washed their hands in his blood," when one of an invading enemy was slain :* and an example appears of the northern inhabitants of this island literally assuaging their thirst for blood during a successful invasion of England in the twelfth century.† If tradition rather than history is to be trusted, something similar took place in the Shetland islands posterior to the union of the crowns.‡ Could we have credited that our ancestors were so

* *Beague*, History of the Campaigns 1548, 1549, p. 94.

† *Ailred de Bello Standardii*, ap. Twysden *Scriptores Decem.* p. 1138.

‡ *Brand*, Description of Orkney, Zetland, Pightland-Firth, and Caithness, p. 116. The author seems to have received this as a traditional story.

sanguinary? It seems as if our savage nature is never to be completely eradicated—that it is only to be subdued by time, or softened by circumstances, and that it may immediately revive as the fetters loosen. We firmly believe that the customs abhorrent to humanity, which were practised of old, are extirpated, because centuries have passed away: that the appetites, propensities, or malevolent affections described to have debased the human mind, subsist no more; because we have not beheld them among thousands, or among millions of men. But the retrogression of mankind reduces them exactly to the stages they have left: and as some unknown or smothered malady breaks forth to disfigure the body, so does the lurking passion when aroused demonstrate the viciousness of the mind. We call it anomalous: it is nothing but nature unrestrained. Man is irascible, he is furious, he is vengeful and cruel: his wrath is always prepared to hurry him to excesses. He knows that he is blinded by paroxysms of passion: yet his cooler moments are devoted to the deliberate execution of atrocities generated by anger. Gradual advances through intermediate stages conduct to a criterion in the issue, which was neither contemplated nor suspected, nor deemed attainable in the outset. That simple displeasure should terminate at last in an implacable savage revenge inspiring the actual thirst for blood, or that an injury should not be otherwise compensated than by the injured seeking the life of the offender,

exacts an extraordinary series and transition of the affections of the mind. We are taught to repress them ; and this is the best discipline which education affords :—we throw off the trammels of self-control ; we return to the condition of our uncultivated race.

By a tyrannical precaution of some eastern kingdoms, all the males of the reigning family excepting one were doomed to perish on the decease of their father, because it would ensure the preservation of the survivor from their jealousies. In fulfilment of this barbarous ordinance, on a certain occasion, an infant was torn from the breast of its mother at the accession of Mahomet II. The unhappy parent, amidst her distraction, was animated, nevertheless, by an insatiable thirst for vengeance, only to be assuaged by having the perpetrator of the death of her child firmly bound and delivered up to her, that she might herself pierce his breast.* When a weak woman could resolve on such a sanguinary deed, and execute it, what may we not believe of men ? But in fact women have shewn themselves equally resolute in desperate undertakings : their natural timidity heightened by education, departs, they are no longer deficient in contrivance and courage. Their revenge is as deadly,

* *Knolles*, Turkish History, vol. 1. p. 229. Edit. 1687, in folio. *Canlemir*, History of the Ottoman Empire, p. 94. says, the father of Mahomet died at the age of 49, and his four brothers of distempers during their father's life.

for their sense of injury is keener. Tavernier, the French traveller, who passed many years in the Asiatic climes, and is of unchallenged veracity, relates, that a favourite of the khan of Shiraz, violently enraged at a young man, stabbed him, and fled to the mountains. Being egregiously the aggressor, no palliation could be found for his offence. The wife, mother, and sister of the deceased, refused a pecuniary compensation offered by the khan, who willingly would have protected his favourite, and demanded an adequate punishment. He evaded immediate compliance, however, by acquainting them that the matter should be referred to his master the King of Persia, that he would not judge of it himself; and accordingly he transmitted the culprit to the capital. The complainers, become implacable, disappointed his purpose in following the offender thither, where they made so loud an outcry for justice, that, notwithstanding the king also would have gratified the governor by sparing him, he found himself compelled to withdraw his protection. He desired the aggrieved to satisfy themselves with the blood of the offender.—It must be understood that there are countries, where the true estimate of regular systems of jurisprudence being unknown, the execution of the laws is not restricted to a common avenger. On the proof of criminality, the criminal is consigned to the hands of the parties aggrieved, who may either inflict his punishment or restore him to liberty: He may be fined or enslaved, he

may be sold or he may be slain. Here the culprit was carried immediately to the great square of the city, where first the widow, and then the sister, plunged a dagger in his breast: nor was their vengeance yet content, for each holding a cup, literally sated their thirst for his blood.* A custom similar, but still of greater barbarity, is charged by one of the latest travellers to a tribe on the western coast of the Red Sea,† and that again is exceeded by examples of individual ferocity.‡ We endeavour to soften the description of these shocking practices: the original narratives must be resorted to, if the reader wishes to see their proper force. All unite in corroborating the danger of yielding to resentment, however just the principle of retaliation; and in proving the expediency of preventing us from being our own avengers.

But mankind are to the highest degree irascible: they are always alive to every violation of their feelings: and we have shewn, what indeed many must experience, that the mental frame of some is so delicately constituted, that it is difficult to avoid giving them offence. Nevertheless, fortitude and self-control enable us to endure personal sufferings to an extraordinary extent—we submit to privations without complaint: their impression is concealed,

* *Tavernier*, Travels, B. v. ch. 13. p. 232. Transl.

† *Burckhardt*, Travels in Nubia, p. 396.

‡ *Bosman*, Description of the Coast of Guinea, Letter II.

or what is displayed of it is proportioned to the decrease of our resolution. Often are serious evils of magnitude borne with resignation, though those of lesser import are met with impatience. Though it be not so in the abstract, the greatness of the evil to us, the sufferer, is exactly according to the distress it occasions. The generality of men, it is observed, are more disposed to resent a contemptuous word than an unjust action; for they can bear any thing better than disgrace. Contempt is directed immediately to wound the feelings; injustice perhaps is not so immediate as to prevent the preparation of the mind for it on the subsidence of the emotions awakened, among which indignation has an ample share: and perhaps those who endeavour to dishonour us by words, and especially by actions, are the objects of more violent resentment, and if they succeed of more implacable revenge, than the authors of all other injuries.—Nor is this unjust. Deeds of hostility are concomitant on war, where force is opposed to force: attempts to dishonour are either clandestine, or where the weaker cannot resist, and practised always in the confidence of impunity. Then if ever is revenge to be palliated; for if indignity sinks us even in our own eyes, what is our consolation in life, what hope of worldly estimation! When Thebes was taken by the army of Alexander, “the calamities which that wretched city suffered were various and horrible. A party of Thracians demolished the house

of Timoclea, a woman of quality and honour. The soldiers carried off the booty, and their captain, after having violated the lady, asked her whether she had not some gold and silver concealed. She said she had, and taking him into the garden, shewed him a well into which she said she had thrown every thing of value when the city was captured. The officer stooped down to examine the well, upon which she pushed him in and dispatched him with stones.* Thus did Timoclea vindicate her disgrace by a desperate vengeance, the more grateful probably, and certainly not the less just, in being inflicted by herself. The Thracians bound her hands, and carried her before Alexander, who discovered her superiority from the fearless manner in which she followed that savage crew. Demanding who she was, she replied, "I am the sister of Theagenes, who, in capacity of general, fought Philip for the liberties of Greece." Alexander admiring her answer, and the bold action she had performed, ordered her to be set at liberty, and her children along with her.

If in the course of these observations the history of mankind is so frequently illustrated from the writings of the ancients, it is because their authority is sanctioned by the lapse of ages. Being familiar to all who are conversant with literature, they can recur to the relation in order to satisfy themselves. Modern history is less concentrated:

* *Plutarch in vita Timoleontis—in vita Alexandri.*

it is known according to the locality of those by whom it is investigated; few are able to unravel the mass involving transactions, for the most part accumulated in number, but not selected from importance, nor do names equally venerable add to its weight. Yet let us remember that nature being unchangeable, every feature in human affairs disclosed by the one must subsist in the other. As the same corporeal substance constitutes the frame throughout the universe, so do the mental affections of mankind correspond. We repeat that we shall find them modified only by time and circumstances.

The Thracian suffered the vengeance of Timoclea, whose exalted mind felt her disgrace, but gave her resolution to be her own vindicator. In the interval of ages, can it be supposed that either the offence or the revenge of the injured were unknown? Modern history relates that during the war which ravaged the Low Countries in the year 1578, a young female in a humble station took vengeance even more sanguinary on the assassin of her honour. But she had a harder fate; for his surviving comrades sacrificed her life to their resentment.*

The pain and indignities offered to those who are dear to our heart, and cling to us for protection,

* Captain Pont, the author of the outrage, sitting at table, turned aside to speak to a soldier, when his innocent victim, Mary Milles, whose disgrace he had aggravated by scoffs and derision, seized a knife and pierced him to the heart.

are still more agonizing than what are offered to ourselves; for we are denied the consolation of meeting them with fortitude. There are scarcely any individuals on whom other individuals are not dependant: nay those seeming the most abject and humble, often have some to shelter still weaker than themselves. As affliction should be soothed, so should succour be given in proportion to imbecility—for the “weak and defective expect compassion to cover, and not pride to mock, and so double their wounds; and both these are in some sort debts of nature; it being the law of reason to honour merit, as it is the law of mercy to cover nakedness.”*

Instinct itself teaches animals to protect their young: it makes the timid bold: and as the lioness rages to defend her whelps, so do parents passionately resent offences to their children. Nature renders us equally implacable for injuries against the helplessness dependant on us. The officers of a Turkish frigate were lately employed in collecting the tribute from the inhabitants of the islands in the Mediterranean. A Greek in Metelin, unable or unwilling to satisfy the exaction, underwent repeated punishment, the usual fashion substituted for persuasion by the arbitrary ruler in enforcing such demands. Subsequently persisting in his refusal, his wife and daughter were exposed to dis-

* *Reynolds*, Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul, p. 325.

graceful outrages, and then put to death by order of the commander. The Greek might have borne his personal sufferings in patience; but these indignities to his family kindled an unquenchable thirst for revenge. Self-preservation was held of no account: could it be gratified, he was willing to perish. Watching his opportunity, therefore, he gained the magazine when the crew were asleep, and blew the vessel, along with himself, in the air. *

§ 3. *Forgiveness*.—Aware of our irascibility, of our thirst for vengeance, and its terrible consequences, moralists, with wise precaution, inculcate the virtue of forgiveness. Revenge is an acknowledgment of pain, say they: it is the province of a lofty mind to despise offence, and ignoble to seek retaliation;† and “forgiving of injuries, and much more returning good for evil, appears wonderfully great and beautiful to the moral sense.”‡ These are dignified sentiments; but they are directed to that reason which is to hold its empire over subjugated passion, not to the frenzied state of the soul itself. One of the hardest tasks that can be imposed on nature is the forgiveness of a grievous injury; and admitting that we ought not to be our own

* *Annual Register*, vol. lvi. Chronicle, p. 116. for 1814.

† Ille magnus et nobilis est, qui more magnæ feræ latratus minutorum canum securus exaudit. *Seneca de Ira*, lib. ii. c. 32. lib. iii. c. 5.

‡ *Hutcheson* on the Passions, Treatise I. Sect. iii. § 6.

avengers, some offences may be of so deep a die as not to merit pardon. Was the archer wrong, in aiming at the life of Richard of England, who could plead that his father and two brothers had fallen by his hands? * Did Timoclea exceed the due measure of retaliation on him who had put an indelible stain on her reputation? Where could the Greek seek for justice on the monsters who blasted his domestic peace for ever, covered his best beloved with shame, and imbrued their merciless hands in their blood? Mankind truly can suffer any thing better than disgrace. A wound may heal, the pain is courageously borne, it is transient and forgot. When Alcander struck out the eye of Lycurgus, this legislator abstained from vengeance when he was delivered up to him: Richard spared the life of the archer from whom his mortal blow was received: but Timoclea destroyed the assassin of her honour: Lucretia, unable to reach her violator, destroyed herself; and the Greek willingly involved himself in the common ruin, that the authors of his intolerable injuries might perish. One may pardon the personal wrong he suffers: He may despise

* *Knyghton*, *Chronicon de Eventibus Angliæ*, lib. ii. cap. 13. ad an. 1199. The king, in a dying state, sent for the archer Bertram Gurdon, who had wounded him, and said, "What evil have I done to you, that I should have received so deadly a wound?"—"You have killed my father and my two brothers," the man replied, "and you wish to take my own life; but I am regardless of punishment provided you suffer."

slander, forget treachery, and forgive insult: his soul may soar above the desire of retaliation. But, who can pardon the wrongs of those who are dear to him, and who are incapable of avenging themselves? Who can forgive the seduction of his wife—the dishonour of his daughter, or bereaving them of unsullied fame? The wound can never heal. It is a mortal offence. Is it fit that it should be forgiven?—In vain do we sue for pity; in vain do we invoke fortitude, or appeal to reason and justice. Frenzy fires the brain—nature cries aloud for vengeance.

Then do the furies brandish the blazing torch of exasperation, goading the injured to quench it in the blood of the aggressor.—

But let us again pause over the incidents which have passed, and look forward to the consequence of being our own avengers. The world will justify us, possibly, in alleviating our pangs, in yielding to overpowering feelings; for it would have required a being more than human to have borne such wrongs in patience. Possibly the retrospect, though painful, will remind us we have done right, for no other choice remained. Even in matters of lesser import we may thus debate with ourselves. “Is it not a duty to punish injury? Who is it that needs forgiveness,—not the virtuous, for they never offend—not the humane or benevolent, for they never wound—it is always the vicious? One who has already sinned betrays his secret dispositions: What else

shall be expected than that he shall still cherish them? Experience proves, that he who has wronged his neighbour once, is not scrupulous to repeat the aggression."

"Certainly in taking revenge a man is but even with his enemy." * Nevertheless, were mankind to retaliate all the injuries to which they are wantonly and wickedly exposed, the universe would teem with discord, aggravated by the craftiness of the weak to bring themselves on a parity with the strong. An offence is sometimes magnified by inability to reach the offender, which stores it up in remembrance awaiting opportunity. That same fortitude which enables us to combat pain and affliction, that resignation which teaches us to bow our heads in silence, ought to steel us against petty attempts at invading our tranquillity. We should despise them, or they should be viewed with distant indignation. There are many vile individuals regardless of rectitude, who rejoice in an occasion to offend, who are careful not to let it escape, and whose utmost delight is to have the worthy for the object of their malevolence. But ought he, who is so far superior, to avenge himself by dealing out a corresponding injury? No: if he descend to notice the insignificant disturber of his peace, it should be with chilling contempt. This is his proper chastisement. The Lacedæmonians prayed their gods to be enabled to bear an af-

* *Bacon, Essays, § 4.*

front, because none who could be affected by it were deemed worthy of being entrusted with any important undertaking. The noble virtue of clemency, that which is truly the ornament of the great, is founded on forbearance alone. We conclude the cruel and the vengeful to be animated by the same spirit: they are held up for abhorrence, while the meek and the merciful claim admiration. They have the virtue of abstaining from what justice would exact in any other cause than their own. On the revolt of Cassius, the empress Faustina wrote to her husband, "Do not spare these men who have not spared you; and who would spare neither our children nor myself had they the mastery." But Antoninus replied, that he would spare both him and his family; for nothing was a higher commendation of an emperor than clemency: An answer, says the historian, which made his subjects regard him as a divinity.* A lofty mind will deride the impotent efforts of the wicked to ruffle its tranquillity: Not because retaliation is unjust, or that he who injures should not be met by suffering. But for the dignified to retaliate on the mean, for the virtuous to avenge themselves on the vicious, is confessing a parity which their better nature spurns. There is something so magnanimous in the forgiveness of an enemy, that it not only courts the applause of the good, but it unwittingly conveys a punishment

* *Vulcatius Gallicanus*. Avidius Cassius, cap. 10, 11.

to the bad. Is it wise, besides, always to embark as our own vindicators? In the first ebullitions of anger, revenge is grateful: but it is precisely at that moment that it should not be taken. Who can then appreciate its exact proportion? Who desires that the wound shall be only so deep as the wound he has received? Who is it that studies to revile the slanderer in equal invectives as have been employed to calumniate himself? If retaliation be just, it is only in its strictly commensurating the offence. But instead of meeting words with words, and deeds by the like, we are not content with less than ruin and extermination. A contemptuous expression must be wiped away with blood: nay, the inanimate remains of the injurer shall be treated with indignity. None of all this excess would be committed by the rational: it is the impulse of passion which deprives us of reason, magnifies the offence, and mistakes its correction. When the pain abates, or the sting is blunted, unless the injury be of some atrocious kind, it will be generally depreciated in the eyes of the sufferer: he will find that he would have visited it with too high a penalty; and however ardent to avenge it at the time, that now it merits no severity. The Romans believed themselves insulted by the Rhodians. "Arrogance," pleaded the Rhodian ambassador to the senate, "especially in words, moves the disgust of the passionate, and the scorn of the wise: and the more if offered by an inferior to a superior. But none has



ever thought it deserving of capital punishment. It has been alleged that the Rhodians contemned the Romans. Some men have indulged in imprecations against the gods : yet we have never heard of any one struck with lightning on that account.”*

Descartes, an eminent philosopher, was wont to observe, that when any person would offend him, he endeavoured to raise his soul so high as to be beyond reach of offence. Descending to resentments, is to meet all the meanness of mankind, who betray their low and grovelling nature in malevolence. It carries us out of our proper sphere.

Where the heart is not vitiated, a mild remonstrance may reclaim the offender ; for offences proceed as much from indiscretion as from design : and surely it is more consistent with justice and mercy than punishment : nor would vengeance be either a grateful or a suitable visitation. Antigonus hearing two soldiers reviling him on account of an order, merely raised the side of his tent, and said, “ You had better retire farther off, lest the king should hear you.” † Augustus importuned to notice slanders, signified that he knew their authors, but verbal detraction did not rouse great indignation : ‡ and Titus sending for two conspirators of Patrician rank, only warned them to desist, for the

* *Livy*, lib. xlv. cap. 23. in fine.

† *Seneca de Ira*, lib. iii. cap. 22.

‡ *Suetonius in vita Augusti*, § 57, 58.

empire was the gift of destiny.* Such is the conduct of the mild and humane, who would rather pardon than punish; who, having the power, even take an interest in preserving the offender. A plain rebuke was sufficient, nor did mischief follow.

If we contrast it with the sanguinary vengeance inflicted for injuries of which all remembrance should be forgot, we shall see its excellence. The lapse of time itself, that which effaces pain, perhaps should palliate wrath; and hence it is so doubtful how far we should avenge those who have preceded us, or an old offence to ourselves. Phocion, an illustrious Grecian, being about to drink hemlock, left a message for his son, "commanding him to abstain for entertaining sentiments of revenge against the Athenians, on account of the lethal draught which he received from them." But the dying king of the Jews, who had given a pledge of safety to an offender, said to his son, "Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him: but his hoary head bring thou down to the grave with blood."—In later times a queen of the Franks expiring of a mortal distemper, accused the physicians of having destroyed her by their potions, and exacted an oath of her husband, that "since she might not live any longer, they should not be able

* Principatum fato dari; *Suetonius* in vita *Vespasiani*, § 9. *Sextus Aurelius Victor*, *Epitome*, cap. 10.

to glory in her death." He ordered two of them to be slain after her obsequies. *

We are mindful of injury, slow to forgive, implacable.

Nothing seems less adapted for transmission to posterity than exasperation: Nothing is so absurd as either hereditary or national animosities. Enmity with adversaries should be only temporary: and it is our duty to forgive private offences where the public interest requires it, or where our country would be strengthened by harmony.

Likewise, the relation in which the offended stand to the offender ought to be seriously considered. The same words from a friend are not to be compared with those from a rival. If we suffer an injury from our nearest ally, it is not to be esteemed so heinous as from a stranger; for much must be borne from persons on an equality with us:† And even those who dwell under our roof, especially our dependents, should be allowed to commit minor offences with impunity: because they are in our power, and because we are as their protectors. Nay, though we are often injured by a brother, we should often forgive him.

It is a glorious precept not to let the sun go down upon our wrath. On all doubtful cases we are bound to put the best construction, and always

* *Gregorius, Turonensis Historia Francorum, lib. v. § 36.*

† *Epictetus, Enchiridion, § 65.*

lean to the side of lenity; for the matter being doubtful, the event may prove that we would have been wrong to do otherwise. It is our duty also to palliate offences offered to ourselves more than to our dependents; because it is expected that the temperate ought to possess a certain share of self-control, and the prudent a magnanimity which weaken the impression.*

Although the forgiveness of injuries belong to the magnanimous, and is essential to the tranquility of the world, let us beware of converting the virtue of forbearance to a vice. It must be moderate in itself, by no means excessive. Short experience shows that we should be incessantly prepared for vigorously repressing the iniquitous,† as they are always ready to break down the ramparts protecting society. It is absurd to say that the sage is not susceptible of either an injury or an affront:‡ for his mental and corporeal system are not differently constructed from those of the multitude, except by the discipline under which he has reduced them. By this he has been elevated so far above the offence that he may not brook to acknowledge it, or it may have the feeblest impression.

* An old author has a chapter "On the thirteenth motive to Love, which is the pardoning of Injuries." *Wright on the Passions of the Mind in general*, p. 223.

† *Aulus Gellius*, lib. xiii. cap. 27.

‡ *Seneca de Constantia Sapientis*, cap. 2. 14.—*de Beneficiis*, lib. ii. cap. 35.

But that he suffers injury, is proved by the necessity of his possessing certain virtues, and of his exerting them to fortify his mind against provocation and the desire of retaliation. Seneca gives undue commendation to Cato, who having been buffeted in the face denied that he was injured. Besides, the extent of the injury offered to us sometimes can be better appreciated by the public than by ourselves.

To pardon injuries is excellent where we have the spirit and the power of resenting them. Some dignified individuals have testified that lofty mind, which could behold the mean and grovelling malevolence of the wicked with disdain, who spurned at retaliation. The generality of mankind cannot boast so high a privilege.—Surely forgiveness chiefly results from the decay of the angry passions; as it would be notoriously inconsistent, that while the smart is felt we should greet the wounder with complacence.

Such is the evolution of some of the malevolent affections of the mind—primarily designed for a beneficial purpose, but unwarily fomented to excesses, and imprudently abused to evil ministry. Our weak and perishable nature is guarded by the senses, which warn us of personal injuries menacing the safety of the corporeal frame; and we instinctively repel that danger from which there is no recoiling. Yet those extreme susceptibilities with which we are in-

vested, would admit our precipitation into fatal errors, were it not that habitual discipline, and an appeal to reason, prohibit the ascendancy of anger generating other baneful passions. Mercy teaches the virtue of forgiveness. An important victory is gained in vanquishing ourselves; we are restrained from violence which might eternally embitter existence; while the germs of a happy and lasting tranquility are fostered.

CHAPTER III.

EVOLUTION OF THE BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

IN so far as we are capable of penetrating the design of nature, whatever animated being does subsist; in the first instance subsists independently for itself. Although it must resort to external objects whence to derive shelter and support, it possesses inherently in itself the means of doing so when in the perfect state, otherwise it would perish. Animated beings therefore are found in that medium which is suited to their organization, and which compels them to seek it if withdrawn; and where also, by circumstances of necessary occurrence, their existence shall be prolonged during a certain period. They are enabled to avail themselves of what they require by locomotion, approximation, extension, adhesion, or other relative alterations in respect to themselves and extraneous matter, in order to the fulfilment of that ultimate purpose which is appointed in the order of things.—Why they originate, why their maturity is postponed, why they are individually allowed to perish, must be referred to reasons inscrutable by human powers. *

* *Dr Barclay*, in his profound and interesting Inquiry into the Opinions concerning Life and Organization, p. 340, 341,

It is admirable however, and a beautiful illustration of the grand premeditations governing the universe, that no race of animated creatures has been fashioned without the means of subsistence also having been previously prepared.

But if perpetuity be inconsistent with life, it is not enough that already existing beings be endowed with such passions only as shall tend to their personal preservation, and that they shall be able to find security; for a destructive principle at the same moment advancing them nearer and nearer to dissolution, the evolution of other affections becomes essential for the general preservation of their race.

As the presence of one part of the world awakens apprehension, and prompts us to put on that defensive armour which in anger repels the injurious; so does the presence of another part awaken an opposite or sympathetic feeling of interest and attraction. Thus our principal personal affections derived from nature, setting aside those arising from an artificial condition, perhaps are confined to sympathy and antipathy only: those of love and aversion are the source and foundation of most if not of all the others.

considers *organization* as the process whereby an organized structure is formed; therefore that this word is unsuitable for expressing the possession of organs or instruments for accomplishing certain purposes. Nevertheless, *organization* is here employed to denote the subsisting structure of the animal system.

But in order that anger, or the means of demonstrating aversion, should have its intended use, providing that animated beings subsist in the first instance solely for themselves, it ought to be of early origin and ready excitation. Benevolence, on the contrary, or that sympathetic feeling for others, being the parent of those kind affections allotted for their preservation, is not alike important to the individual in whom it resides, and therefore may be of later origin and of slower growth. Accordingly, all the sensations dependant on it are more leisurely evolved: they demand a certain concurrence of circumstances, which may be very long deficient. While the senses and the perceptions are entire, it can be scarcely affirmed that any individual is not susceptible, in a very lively manner, of anger and aversion, or of that fear which is generated by experience: but many may pass their whole life without evolution of the greater part of the benevolent affections. Pain mixed with pleasure is concomitant both on malevolence and benevolence; but they are of different kinds, and may be of different intensity. The pleasure of benevolence lies in a consciousness of well doing, united to the gratification of a being in whom we take an interest: the pain which we feel for the distresses of the suffering, flows from the picture represented, and from bringing it home to ourselves. But the pain of malevolence is of a more obscure description, combined with the irregular tumult which a keen desire to injure excites; and

the pleasure is derived from having actually inflicted the evil. These pains and pleasures, however, are extremely complex, often dissimilar, and are difficult to be explained. By a remarkable aberration in the progress of the passions, which having gained their paroxysm should subside into tranquillity, there is a sudden inversion of our love to scorn or to hatred, urging the hurt of those who held the best place in our affections. It is seldom that resentment changes to that placidity admitting immediate oblivion of an injury, prompting regard for the offender, or desirous of uniting bitter enemies in friendship. If we abstain from vengeance, it is because the sense of the wrong decays, or because we are too indolent, or despise to resent it. If love decays, it is because the property which kindled it has faded. But as if the world were too small for mortals, they are more sundered by jealousies and emulation, than attracted by a sympathetic anxiety for reciprocal support. Likewise their ambition prompts them to expel every one besides from the territory on which they have established themselves as their own. On this account it may be that nature has devised some vehement appetites, propensities, and passions, which in the first instance shall effect a bond of union among the human race, and in the second give birth to other sensations which shall be the more immediate or the remote means of their preservation. These are occasionally, not always, elicited, so far as our limited observation goes; but

possibly as frequently and extensively as on the vast scale of the universe tends to counterbalance the destructive evils incessantly operating against animated existence.

Thus malevolence and benevolence are the great and leading division of the human affections of the mind, which have a relation to the welfare of living creatures, and they seem specially devised for opposite purposes. Perhaps we are thence entitled to conclude, that they powerfully contribute towards preserving the universal equilibrium.

Benevolence is the parent of all the amiable feelings and sensations by which life is endeared to ourselves, as it is the source of all the gratifications and comforts by which it becomes the enjoyment of others. However diversified the form, through whatever channels it operates, and notwithstanding its actual origin and aspect be disguised from those whom it animates, its invariable end and motive is to cherish and preserve. The attachment reciprocally attracting the sexes, parental love, fraternal affection, the regard of friendship, charity, and the discharge of hospitality, are some of the most prominent modes in which it is displayed. Probably also gratitude, esteem, and patriotism, which may be either an anxiety for the honour and glory of the soil which gave us birth, or more immediately an interest in those who dwell upon it, are principally dependent on the benevolent affections of

the mind. The last, indeed, can be traced to the subsistence and recollection of early associations, or familiarity with those by whom we know we are beloved, and with those scenes and objects which perpetually recall the idea of home.*

Benevolence, therefore, is a sympathetic interest in the welfare of mankind at large, or a peculiar and affectionate regard for individuals stimulating to do them good offices. It even extends to tenderness and humanity towards the brute creation, wildly roaming in their native haunts, or subdued under our dominion.

Thus nature herself, after teaching us instinctively to shun and to repel injuries from which our perishable frame would suffer, has awakened certain sensations to counteract the destruction that might thence ensue, and to fill the soul with pleasure.

CLASS I. § 1. *Love*.—But the principal passion produced from the grand laboratory of nature, and that which is of chief importance to the conservation of the universe, is love in its proper acceptation, whereby the two great divisions of animated beings are attracted reciprocally, and united together. For let it

* A confused and irregular series of the malevolent and benevolent affections is exhibited by *Dr Reid*, *Active Powers of Man*, Essay iii. chap. 3, 4, 5. As the former, he enumerates, 1. Relationship; 2. Gratitude; 3. Compassion; 4. Esteem; 5. Friendship; 6. Love; 7. Public Spirit. The latter comprehend, 1. Emulation; 2. Resentment.

be remembered, that all things relative to individuals are transient; but whatever concerns the subsistence of the world is of such incessant recurrence as to be equipollent to permanence. Therefore as animated existence would speedily go to wreck and decay, because life and perpetuity are incompatible, a secret device is planned for arousing agreeable sympathetic sensations mutually emanating from each of the sexes of the human race which shall enchain the other. Thus by the utmost simplicity are the arrangements of the world, though in some respects inscrutable, continued. We behold their effects, we witness their use and importance; while the real operative causes are unknown.

Yet however amiable and interesting this passion may be esteemed, however delightful and artless as we are wont to picture it, without philosophically contemplating its origin, its progress, and subsidence, it does not appear that nature proposes to derive the highest advantage from what we are apt to design its purity. No: It assumes a grosser character, one intermingled with selfishness, which rather arouses the appetites than engages the mind. None of that exalted sentiment, where solicitude is combined with pain and pleasure, animates him who, captivated by the glance of beauty, pants for possession, and plots the means of succeeding. The senses alone are occupied; they have received the impressions which beauty, indeed, by a nameless charm, imparts, but the mind is not absorbed; an

inherent propensity is awakened, which may be remotely compared with hunger or thirst, to be allayed by grateful food or delicious beverage. It is merely an appetite. Nor does it seem that the immediate course of nature goes further. Circumstances are constantly occurring to prove, that in many situations our appetites and inclinations are so grovelling, so debased, that neither beauty nor symmetry are necessary for the excitement of their lower stages.

But viewing the passion of which we speak under its refined and purest aspect, we behold a tender solicitude, cherished by modesty, fostered by esteem, kindling a flame which rages with boundless impetuosity, breaks every fetter, bursts every bond, and swells with power uncontrollable. It occupies the mind only; it cannot be mistaken for gross corporeal propensity: and hence it is accompanied by an irregular succession, a wild tumult of sensations, tremor, agitation, dark suspicions, jealous anxieties, groundless alarm, alternate fear and hope. How many intermediate and complex mental affections are thus evolved, elating with confidence, sinking in despair, conjuring up empty phantoms, which reason and evidence scarcely can dispel!

Amidst the multiplicity of conflicting emotions taking possession of the soul, we shall cease to wonder at the excesses they have produced: that in their gentler evolution, or their raging vehemence, good or evil, happiness or misery, have flowed from

them. Some will not be content in bestowing their own affections; they must have affection in return: enwrapt in the object of them, they will suffer no participation: Every one who breathes upon it is beheld with horror and aversion.

It is when under the influence of this passion, in its refinement mutually awakening the sensibilities, that the one sex desires to appear the most amiable, and the other the most reputable in the eyes of the other, as reciprocal recommendations. Hence have sprung those great and glorious deeds enrolling men in the list of heroes: hence that softness, delicacy, interest, and invention, embellishing the finest feelings that glow in the female breast.

What is the purpose of all this contrivance? It is something more than the mere evanescent excitements inspired by the external aspect of the other numberless varieties of beings occupying the earth. We hunger, we thirst, because a substitution is required to supply the waste occasioned by simple existence of the animal frame: yet were not the means of assuaging them, and therefore of prolonging life, beneficently furnished, there would be no cravings, for cravings would be vain. A definite purpose is now to be fulfilled by a union, which shall be of some permanence at least, and from which certain important consequences are to be accomplished. We must look farther than the simple subsistence of the passion in the mind.

Meantime a remarkable alteration is occasioned in the temper, and the whole demeanour of the being which it inspires. Man is no longer boisterous, rude, fierce, and impatient; he is gentle, calm, and persuasive: even the ferocious tenant of the forest growls complacency at the approach of his mate. We speak of a secret sympathy operating on the human race: secret assuredly, for we cannot define what is the emanation, the aspect, or property by which it is awakened. Is it beauty? many are insensible of its charms. Is it virtue? many cannot distinguish it. Is it delicacy, is it talent? these are lost on the unpolished majority of mankind. Thousands pass on unheeding and unheeded, until one is arrested—a spell or fascination rivets him to the centre of the magic circle. Then does the change begin.

Nature has allowed her children susceptibility of the other passions; but every thing conspires to establish that she forbids the exemption of any of them from this. Their grand division into two, and only two separate parts: their progress from infancy to adolescence: the subsequent ripening of the mind when the exercise of its rational faculties shall be so profitable, support these conjectures. But it cannot be maintained that she has intended the susceptibilities of all to render them equally the sport of its violence: for some of her frail productions, instead of being bettered, would sink under the tumult. As with certain other passions, so it is

here. Faint and feeble, scarcely warmed in their outset, they come at last to shake us with convulsion, or terminate in mental alienation and death.

However it appears that the universal equilibrium is to be preserved rather from continued mediocrity, than from being balanced by extremes: whence such a disastrous close is comparatively of rare occurrence; that it is enough if the passion subsists in a milder form, and if we are liable to be overborne by it to destruction, possibly our frame could not enjoy equal sensibilities otherwise. The component parts of the mind, the reciprocal connection of the constituent parts of the intellectual system, and the relation between the mind and the person, are inexplicable; that it is intimate, may be certainly affirmed from beholding their mutual effects.

The genuine passion, once excited, is sometimes permanent, until abating into the warmest friendship, thus terminating in benevolence as it begun. Sometimes, like other passions, it subsides, and vanishes as its object is removed: but whether there be any difference between its excesses and theirs; whether it may subsist longer in extraordinary violence without being noxious, is difficult to be determined. Perhaps although there is a difference in the duration of the paroxysms of the passions, general analogies pervade the whole: and as the hotter the fire the quicker the fuel is consumed, so do most of them exhaust themselves in proportion to their violence. If nature has permitted ex-

cess in mental affections, she seems to prohibit its permanence.

Interesting as it is to the reflecting mind, because manifesting the symmetry of the universe, we are restrained from prosecuting discussion of the subject, because it is reserved for the giddy part of mankind to seek its illustration in the fictions of romance; an occupation as delightful to them as the philosophic contemplator finds in the real harmonies of nature. Let us be permitted briefly to observe, that such an absolute empire is gained over the soul by this passion, that every peril is braved, every difficulty conquered, to reach its object: but worse and more unhappy are its consequences; for some, despising the precepts of duty and moral obligation, scruple not to commit iniquities for that purpose, in blind obedience to the sovereign ruler for the moment. Those again of more acute and delicate susceptibilities, have become the victims of unrequited affection, pining away in grief and disappointment.

Yet although we refrain from illustrations easily accessible, or touch on the province of those who would rather dwell on fictitious narratives, moulded according to the fancy of their author, than on historical truth, a few circumstances relative to the aberration of the passions are not void of importance.

In the same manner as we see the infection, the crisis, and the cure of personal maladies, we find the corresponding course of the passions in excite-

ment, paroxysm, and subsidence. As we cannot remain under continual excitement, and as protracted paroxysms would be inevitably pernicious, we are restored by their subsidence to that quiescence which is essential to our well-being. Passions indeed may generate other passions; but it seems, for the most part, designed, that they shall be exhausted in themselves.

It is grievous to discover, that sensations evidently intended for peace and pleasure in their proper course, may become in their irregular progress the sources of disquiet and misery. We doat on our beloved; all is rapture and extacy; the chains of slavery are lightly borne, the storm is never felt, the zephyr is ever balmy; time and the world are unheeded and as nothing; we live for that object only. But amidst our felicity, a diabolical perversion of the mind ensues, converting placidity to anger, and love to aversion: and that favoured being for whose welfare or preservation life would have been a welcome sacrifice, falls by the remorseless arm which the very thought of injury would have palsied.

This is no fiction: too many melancholy proofs of the fact could be given were it consistent to enlarge a subject, which in its detail is scarcely consistent with the tenor of these Illustrations. The best and soundest theories are there established on practical observation, which may be pleaded against that fastidious taste calling for examples of

the dignity of human nature, and refusing to sympathize in the feelings of mankind. But the inversion of the passions, the instant subsidence of the most powerful, and the instant rise and paroxysm of others in quiescence, being so opposite to the appointed progression of the mental operations, merits some discourse. The passions exhaust themselves in gratifications, or they simply decay with waning time. The benevolent affections must cease when the object exciting them is no more: and the malevolent are extinguished with its annihilation. We love our friends and our country: But have not some great and lofty souls, the firmest patriots, been stung with neglect, where gratitude should have hailed them; and denied the just reward of their merit—have they not given way to resentment, and hated the soil that gave them birth?—So may the passions originating in benevolence be inverted,—and ardent friends become bitter enemies.—But these are remote analogies.

It has been offered as a maxim, that the more vehement the attachment between the sexes, the readier is the access of hatred.* Were this well founded, many instances should occur of the inversion of affection: but they are rare: for we do not speak of growing disgust ripening into aversion. Therefore is it not rather a sudden and instant frenzy, such as agitates the wretched maniac, who

* *Roche foucault*, M. 277.

often comes to abhor those whom he has loved and cherished?—Some time previous to the year 1779, a respectable young English officer formed an attachment to a female of engaging manners, young like himself, and sheltered by the same roof where hospitality had invited him, though not under the most reputable circumstances. A corresponding partiality was awakened in her breast, which soon exceeding the bounds of prudence, they were separated by means of the person on whom she was dependant. The officer was obliged to follow his regiment: but as obstacles rivet affection, a mutual pledge of permanent union was interchanged; and for a considerable period both persisted in their design. Matters assumed a different complexion, however, as he repaired from Ireland to London: it was signified to him that his visits were no longer acceptable, that the intended union now had become impracticable, and that the intercourse hitherto kept up must be entirely abandoned. Frustration of his hopes rendered the officer pensive and melancholy, a military life grew unsuitable to him; therefore he took orders in the church, and obtained a living in the county of Norfolk. But he had mistaken his influence over himself: former delusions of expected felicity haunted his imagination; and he proved incapable of acceding to the separation. His proposals were renewed, which, not meeting with success, he appeared more and more unhappy, and seems to have determined on curing his disappointments by

suicide. Either from wanting sufficient resolution, or from accident, his project failed. He then clandestinely accompanied the object of his affections to the theatre: he saw her there in conversation with others, and likewise following her as she retired, he, to the horror and amazement of the spectators, became her assassin on the streets. No sooner was the shocking deed perpetrated, than the miserable man directed another weapon against himself. He fell beside the innocent victim of his frenzy; but not by a mortal wound: for he survived to pay the forfeit of his crime, enduring it with piety and resignation, and praying to be laid in the same grave with her whom he had destroyed.* So did two unhappy beings perish, who might have found lasting felicity in each other.

We say the examples of such a catastrophe are rare: it is essential they should be so; for are they not the widest aberrations from nature, the most adverse to her decrees and ordinances? Still they are not solitary perhaps in any country, when we find those around us bearing testimony to their subsistence. Nor is it by awaiting the mutual distastes which embitter society, and alienate those united in love and friendship, that this inversion of the passions is produced. We are enabled by our perceptions to judge of effects, we must lean to con-

* *The Case and Memoirs of the late Rev. James Hackman, London, 1779, in 8vo. Old Bailey Trials for 1779.*

jectures in penetrating causes, the intermediate process is hidden. The firmest bonds uniting the hearts of mankind may quit their hold ; but daggers ought not to be unfolded in their decay. The loosening of love should decline into friendship ; but friendship is banished by aversion. What was it but the sudden inversion of passion, exhibited by such a notorious instance in scriptural history, that led to the persecution of the patriarch who had been sold into bondage, whereby disappointed affection was instantaneously turned to hatred ? We wish to call it frenzy when one acts at last in opposition to all his preceding agency.

A few years antecedent to the incident above detailed, one little dissimilar, and nothing less disastrous, occurred in the neighbouring island, where the object of attachment perished by the wilful hand of a man who certainly had entertained the warmest affection for her. *

At an earlier period than the occurrence of either, a long judicial investigation was instituted in France, which disclosed a scene of iniquity, apparently originating exclusively from an inversion of the ordinary progress of human affections. It savours indeed more of romance, because there is such an unlikely combination of events, that they might rather be ascribed to invention than to the narrative of truth, of which those who seek amusement in

* *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xxxi. for 1761, p. 607.

such matters, may satisfy themselves by perusal of the history at length. Two brothers of the Marquis de Gange conceived a violent attachment to his wife, then in the bloom of youth and beauty. Her union with the Marquis, notwithstanding these allurements, had ceased to be felicitous ; from which, in a libertine country, the two profligates, unrestrained by the scruples of morality, hoped to profit. The one of these, a churchman, cloaked his principles under the sanctified garb of his profession ; the other, less artful, put himself under the guidance of his brother : but both united in plotting the dishonour of their relative. She, however, endowed with better principles, resisted their seductions ; and the abandoned wretches, to pave the way for their wickedness, proposed between themselves that one should withdraw not to cross the other in his projects. The Abbé therefore remained, and persisted in his suit assiduously. It failed of its desired impression : the Marchioness, though suffering many afflictions contributing to embitter her domestic life, preserved her reputation unsullied. At length, while he ardently urged his affection, she signified to him, coldly and then contemptuously, the sentiments with which he had inspired her in return. Fired with resentment, he withdrew ; but not yet repulsed, reiterated his attempts, which met only with ultimate disdain. The brothers again united ; but for another purpose—that of gratifying a diabolical revenge, which now had supplanted their affection.

Their external demeanour was entirely altered, for mildness lulls suspicion ; and it became such as they believed would be acceptable to a woman professing the moral integrity of their sister, who herself, ignorant of guile, was deluded into confidence. With unsuspecting liberality she supplied the pecuniary necessities of the Chevalier de Gange, the younger of the brothers, a man of softer manners, and the less obnoxious of the two. The whole family then retired to the country, and the brothers, who were its inmates, along with the rest. Soon after their arrival there, the Marchioness fell sick. The brothers unexpectedly entered her chamber ; and the Abbé approached her bedside with the terrifying apparatus of a cup in one hand and a pistol in the other, while the chevalier brandished his naked sword. The former abruptly exclaimed, “ You must die ; take your choice of the means ! ” The unfortunate victim of their hatred endeavoured to expostulate first, and then to move the compassion of the fierce assailants ; and she chiefly directed her moving plea to him who seemed less hardened in vice. But they proved alike inexorable : and to her prayers and entreaties, the chevalier only answered ; “ It must be so, madam : make your choice ; or if you will not, we shall instantly make it for you. ” — It is needless to follow out the recital : these monsters in human shape perpetrated a horrible assassination, and on an amiable being, for whom both had professed the warmest affection, whom the

ties of relationship bound them to regard, and whose honour it was their duty to respect.—Nor does iniquity always meet its punishment, for both escaped the arm of justice. *

Nearly about the same time, as we may conclude, a disastrous event of a similar description happened to the Marchioness D'Obizzi at Padua, where a public monument was erected commemorative of her virtue. After fifteen years imprisonment, the offender escaped; but he fell by the hands of the son of her who had been his victim. †

Probably our recent domestic history affords several examples, where persons of either sex have been the agents, or have fallen in such catastrophes. But instead of the immediate inversion of love to hatred, they cannot be clearly divested of some other conflicting passions, wherein jealousy perhaps has been predominant, while the others had not the slightest tincture of it. Thus it is fresh in remembrance, that perpetration of such fatal acts have been followed by suicide: as if the sacrifice of one life were not enough, frenzy has exacted two. ‡ Yet

* *Pitaval Causes celebres et interessantes*, tom. v. p. 249.

† *Misson Nouveau Voyage D'Italie*, tom. i. p. 182. Edit. 1691. The date of the occurrence is not specified; that of the monument is 1661.

‡ The case of James Mitchell and Mary-Anne Welchman—of W. H. Hollins and Elizabeth Pilcher—of Frances Colvill, *Annual Register*, vol. lvi. for 1814, Chronicle, p. 55. 71. 127. 141. vol. lvii. for 1815, Occurrences, p. 105; to which may be added that of Elizabeth Broderick somewhat earlier.

more pitiable, if true, it is told of a youthful English female, who, seeking to assuage the flames of a delirious passion in the shades of night, at the same instant plunged a dagger in the breast of her paramour, that her shame might be veiled in their united death.*

An eloquent author, Senault, perhaps would refer these catastrophes to anger only; "for while anger reigns it stifles all the other passions; in its empire it converts love to hatred, and piety into fury. For lovers have been seen, who, in the excess of their rage, have plunged in their own breast the same poniard with which they had pierced the bosom of their mistress, and who have committed actual murders to revenge imaginary injuries."†

What are the deeds, whither the excesses into which the passions have not hurried mankind? Fiction would make a mockery of itself, all the wide field of the most fertile imagination would prove barren in the contrivance of incidents surpassing the nameless and terrible afflictions befalling the human race. Moralists dwell on the greater proportion of good than evil allotted to our sublunary condition. Yet there is an eternal renewal of pain: joy is ever counterbalanced by sorrow. It may be true that all the designs of nature are in their simplicity for the comfort and prosperity of man-

* *Biography of Suicides.*

† *Senault l'Usage des Passions, Part II. Traité v. Discours.*
1. p. 397.

kind—our stay would be too transient were it otherwise. But we are incessantly arrested by the obtrusion of calamities on our notice. Perhaps they are aberrations from the common rules which govern the world. Most of what we are accustomed to consider the deviations of nature from her ordinary course seem productive of infelicity—the violent jarring of the elements; peculiarities of corporeal configuration, or in the structure of the mental system. The latter admits of no substitute—the soul is defective—the defects of the body require a counterpoise in the excellence of the mind. Let us recollect, however, that we and all around us are advancing by irresistible progress towards deperdition: a grand event, and the only one which we know to be certain, awaits us: we are perpetually warned to recollect it from the perishable condition of man. But nature, in admitting the necessity of that event, has one equally grand in view,—the means of preserving our race; therefore, although the ravages of decay are ineffaceable, we shall obscurely comprehend how the exquisite sensations which she inspires for the evident preservation of her children, are, by a wonderful revolution, perverted to their destruction.

§ 2. *Union of the Sexes.*—All the designs of nature have a grandeur and importance dazzling to the brightest intellectual conceptions, while by the most secret and artless means they are fulfilled.

Mere susceptibility of a passion is not enough, something more depends on its inspiration; and here the most imposing of all her designs is to be silently accomplished in the perpetuation of the animated world. But does nature cast her creatures loose? does she bid them wander throughout the universe in quest of uncertain associations? does she allow them to blend together in confusion, and give birth to all the varieties which florid fancy can picture in the new evolutions of existence? No: By fixed and unalterable laws, insurmountable boundaries are established which shall preserve eternal harmony. Kind after kind, species after species, individuals after individuals hitherto unseen, are not permitted to fill the earth in endless disorder: Each living being is attracted to a living being; but like itself alone, of the same figure, of the same appetites and habits separating its race from all others. Thus by the simplest arrangement do the creatures of the globe remain pure and unmixed; at the end of things they are found as they were at the beginning; and, notwithstanding some huge monsters be extinct in the lapse of ages, we know not that new life has been given to the humblest insect that crawls.

Though evil be sometimes consequent on the passion whose features we have thus rapidly glanced, it is generally productive of felicity in attaining the grand preliminary purpose of nature,—the union of the sexes. The customs of mankind almost uni-

versally have determined that it shall be permanent; but whether this be intended by nature herself, or whether she means only a temporary union wherein all her children shall share, is a subject of peculiar difficulty. That all shall participate in it, is clearly to be inferred from the remarkable equality of the sexes: for the preponderances seen in one country, or in another, or at different times, or in limited computations, are the result of restricted views; and they will be discovered in near correspondence if taken on the most extensive scale. We are entitled to conclude, that nothing subsists in vain; and if animate beings are not alike, but partitioned into two great divisions, that each of these subsists on account of the other; therefore that it flows as a corollary, the union of each individual is ultimately contemplated from its having been summoned into existence. It may seem hardy, in this manner, to attempt scrutinizing designs so remote from the possibility of human knowledge to ascertain. Could we actually unfold them, all would conspire, it is probable, in further elucidating the harmonies of the universe. If we judge of causes from effects, it is not to arraign the wisdom directing them. Human institutions, often founded on ignorance, caprice, or prejudice, would be a stumbling guide to the ordinances of the creation. They spring from mistaken speculations of comfort and happiness: They are devised by the artful and the selfish: They try to restrict nature; but unless they forge the fetters along with them, nature will be always free.

If a temporary union suffice to fulfil the great objects for which the mutual affection of the sexes is devised, one that is permanent is more favoured from the superior conveniences proved by experience to be concomitant upon it. New and endearing interests flow from its subsistence: but duly weighing its abstract purpose, we shall discover that it is simply one of the many social contracts instituted also for convenience. The infinite diversity of its forms and ceremonies, the privileges or the privations with which it is attended, show the fluctuations of opinion, and how greatly mankind have been perplexed in contriving what they should find most satisfactory when reduced to permanence.

If union be the result of the mutual attraction of the sexes, it does not follow that it shall be protracted longer than the passion producing it remains unabated: and as the vehemence of passion exhausts itself, we would conclude that this temporary bond is never far from dissolution. But, probably, something further is in contemplation, and the care of the nascent offspring leads to that first stage of permanence which teaches the inconvenience of separation. Conjugal affection, the haven of those tumultuous emotions of earlier sympathy, now a placid substitute, comes to illustrate the noblest virtues of the human breast. The rudest tribes, the most polished people, the remotest æras, the nearest times, concur in embellishing the reciprocal devotion of tender spouses, in meeting

dangers and disasters, and even death, as a pledge of their love. No fortune has proved too hard to be shared, no hazard too imminent to be divided, no pain too cruel for endurance: nor, to crown the whole, has any ingenuity been too deep in practising the reciprocal relief of either in distress. Should we dare to sap the foundations whereon such interests are reared? Is the image of conjugal affection and fidelity to be adorned, wherein the only object is the object beloved? How delightful must that condition be, where solicitude is the offspring of virtue, and where tenderness is requited with solicitude! where the chief business of existence is in acts of mutual kindness, and each feels the treasure of possession in its intrinsic value! Then, after a life felicitous, because neither has been deficient in love or duty, each is willing that it shall close together; for the loss of one affectionate mate would render survivance intolerable.

But in anticipating this eventful period, let a few illustrations prove the truth of these remarks. If they be thought superfluous, they exhibit some amiable features in contrast of human infirmities and vice. A future opportunity will occur to shew the ambitious desire for domestic dominion, and certain diversities in conjugal associations: our present retrospect shall omit a special discussion on the best means of accomplishing a union of which so much has been said and written: on what is the preferable age and season, who are the persons entitled to

withhold their consent, what is to be expected from incongruity or correspondence of dispositions, whether a reciprocal privilege to withdraw shall terminate discordant feelings and shun misfortune; questions which, with many others, are very often agitated, and all as yet unsolved. Neither shall we enquire how far the ordinances of nature are infringed by the customs of men prohibiting the union of the nearer relatives, or what are the inequalities of years or condition that are to be avoided, because prejudices might be too impatient to endure the investigation. No subjects have had more reflection than these; for in none is such a multitude, so vast a proportion of the world, interested: and as if their legal, their civil and moral difficulties were small, superstition in some places has also interposed its trammels to add to the embarrassment.

In general it may be briefly observed, that as age is a relative term in respect to years alone, considerable disparities are not necessarily productive of inconvenience. In the strictest equity, those exclusively who enter into a serious engagement, ought to be called on for their consent; but as our reasoning is cool only in the absence of passion, it is when under its influence that we are benefited by the direction of our friends. Endowed with self-command, we are able to guide ourselves. Equality of circumstances affords the fairest promise of felicity; for we cannot expect to be immediately familiarized in countries which we enter as strangers.

A great rise or a great fall has the same tendency to ruffle the smooth and ordinary course: Poverty and riches, rank and degradation, are difficult to be complacently borne. Unexpected results indeed are concomitant on all human arrangements; and, as a palliative for those which are afflicting, less required in prosperity, our disposition is so pliant that there is scarcely any condition to which we may not be reconciled. But we cannot deny that "a main and principal thing that causes marriages to be so unhappy, and makes this state of life so miserable, is the inequality of them."* To this may be added our utter ignorance of futurity, which brings so many new propensities and events to light, which we could not suspect were lurking undiscovered, or probable to ensue. Whatever is proposed by nature can be easily accomplished by mankind: their difficulties arise when they themselves propose deviations. The union of the sexes is said to have been a state affair among some ancient nations: it was under the cognizance of the magistracy, just as the law and the church so carefully interfere at present. More anxiety was testified for posterity than for the authors of their existence: the prospects and pleasures whereon the wise and unbiassed part of

* *Bufford, Essay against unequal Marriages*, p. 11, London, 1693, in 12mo. Laws are said to have been enacted in France to repress the inequality of such alliances; and men of birth were subjected to public indignities for having formed a union with women among the vulgar.

mankind rest their hopes of happiness were allowed to fade in empty delusions. The citizen married not for himself but for his country. Is it not self-evident, how hazardous it is for those having attained the years of discretion to be brought into any condition which has no visible termination without their own consent. Affection is not a sympathy at command : nor can we take the same lively interest in one for whom we feel no regard, as if the warmest love had bound us. Therefore if those endeared to each other be precluded from indulging their affection, what felicity is to be expected from the union of persons who have none, or in union from constraint.

We cannot maintain, however, that in its outset conjugal affection is any thing different in quality from the attachment uniting the sexes. The birth of offspring may give it other features, and it may be modified by continued association ; the vehemence of passion may be subdued ; but an equal interest for either party is excited in either stage : perhaps more strongly felt previous to a permanent union, and even where such a union is unattainable.

Many examples prove how firmly conjugal love is rivetted in the one sex ; but whether from the greater dependance, or from the more powerful influence of the passions, the larger proportion belongs to the other. Women have gloried in their conjugal faith and affection, and in their determination to participate in the same untoward destinies

as their husbands, though a better were offered to them. They have refused to feel as irksome to themselves what was urgent and distressing to those with whom they were united. When Dionysius reproached his sister Theste with concealing her husband's flight from him, she replied, "Do you think me so bad a wife, Dionysius, or so weak a woman, that, if I had known my husband's flight, I would not have accompanied him, and shared his worst fortune? Indeed I was ignorant of it, and I assure you that I should esteem it a higher honour to be called the wife of Philoxenes the exile, than the sister of Dionysius the king."* All the older histories of females sharing the hardships of distant journies, or even the dangers of war, are daily realized before us. We need no longer illustrate their fame by reference to the works of Plutarch, of Polyænus, of Valerius Maximus, to the customs of the Greeks and Romans, and other ancient nations. It seems scarcely remarkable to hear that "Hipsicratea, the Queen of Mithridates, accompanied him in his wars, from love of her husband, bearing all his hardships, and proving a great comfort to him: She wore man's apparel, cut her hair, and accustomed herself to ride on horseback armed."† The modern European nations afford infinite examples of wives embarking in voyages of discovery along

* *Plutarch in vita Dionis.*

† *Valerius Maximus, lib. iv. cap. 6. De Amore Conjugali.*

with their husbands, or under the slenderest protection encompassing the globe: sometimes crossing immense deserts, accompanying armies in their campaigns, and dwelling in the camp within the very hearing of battle.* Latent human energies are unfolded the most readily by natural and political convulsions: those of modern times have produced heroines innumerable; but none have been greater than they who, along with their husbands, supported the royal cause in La Vendée during the French revolution. Our æra would be embellished by the simple record of their names. There did the Marchioness Lescure attend her husband, who commanded the royalists throughout their incessant campaigns, suffering equal privations, and encountering the same perils as environing him. She boldly advanced, for his presence inspired her with confidence. Where famine raged, she bore it without repining: where the battle began, the cannon balls of the enemy often rolled before her; if compelled to retreat by superior force, she rode undaunted among the bodies of the slain. The brave commander was mortally wounded in the conflict; but the courage of his adherents lived in the goodness of their cause until numbers overpowered them, and they fled. Yet this heroine accompanied the

* *Haudricourt*, Records of the French Nation and of the Allied Powers, vol. ii; Madame Verdier.—Madame Freycinet lately accompanied her husband on a voyage of discovery from France.—*Taylor*, Travels from England to India.

side of his litter, administering every tender office during a disastrous retreat until he breathed his last. His army being defeated and dispersed, the Marchioness was proscribed and eagerly pursued by the ferocious republicans. She was obliged to lurk several years in the woods, or conceal herself in stables or cottages, where, staining her skin, she evaded discovery and persecution. At last, after exhibiting the most heroic devotion, after exposure to incredible hardships and alarms, and all the while in the bloom of youth, to render her fate still the more interesting, she owed her safety only to an act of amnesty.* Happy are they who, dwelling in peace and security, have the uninterrupted enjoyment of each others society; who can impart their mutual pleasures, and console their mutual pains: Amidst the serenity of tranquil life, let them contemplate, with admiration, such patterns of conjugal affection, such fortitude and virtue.

Next, if we consider the ingenuity and determination practised by women to relieve their husbands; the ready contrivance, or deep laid stratagems, which, if abortive, had left themselves in still greater peril, they are proved to be no less heroines than before. They are ever ready to substitute themselves in the place of danger; and the same expedients occupy their minds, and are assimilated in their duty and affection, though their race, or their æra, or their

* *Larochejaquelein Memoires.*

country, have had no common correspondence. Women, it is true, are of a gentler nature: they are more open to humanity, and have an innate tenderness for all. The stranger has greater confidence in their protection; and the weary traveller seldom appeals to their succour in vain. Looking back to antiquity, we read, that a tribe of strangers fell under displeasure of the people among whom they were allowed to settle in one of the Grecian states. Some of their number being condemned to die, they were imprisoned until the hour of punishment: but meanwhile their wives having obtained access in veils, wore as a sign of affliction, they profited by the interview to exchange their dress, whereby the keepers being deceived, permitted the culprits to escape.* Exactly the same device has been repeatedly practised under similar circumstances; and it has been seen among ourselves. In the year 1716, one of the rebel peers was thus relieved by the admirable address of his lady obtaining such an interview in the Tower, on the very day preceding that appointed for his execution:† Nor ought so

* *Herodotus*, lib. iv. § 145, 146: The tribe Minyæ. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. iv. c. 6, nearly copies him.

† An interesting narrative remains from the Countess of Nithsdale herself of the detail of her stratagems. She did not stay behind, but departed leaving the guards in the belief that they had still their prisoner. In that narrative she complains bitterly of King George I. to whom she offered a petition for mercy to the Earl her husband: and while she seized the skirts of his coat, he dragged her to the middle of the presence chamber, where she was obliged to quit her hold.

noted an example of conjugal affection as that of Madame Lavalette, testified at Paris in the year 1815, to fall into oblivion. Her husband, a distinguished military officer, had been employed by the French government preceding the restoration of the family of Bourbon: he was arraigned, and convicted of having served Napoleon; and the time appointed for him to live was equally short, when he was preserved by the like intrepidity. These facts are yet recent; and it is also known, that had it not been restrained by shame, the strong hand of power would have gladly wreaked itself on this virtuous woman, who only fulfilled her duty, because the ardour of its vengeance had been disappointed. But are not the warmth of such attachments, such fidelity and resolution, firmer bonds to unite mankind, more conducive to real security, more essential to the cause of virtue, than all the frigid precautions of that political justice which would arm the wife against her husband, or extinguish conjugal love? What would become of the world were the tenderest connections to be sundered, or the dearest relatives abandoned in the hour of need, because some stern maxim of state convenience is filled with menaces against granting them assistance? It is at that season of all others, when, instead of punishments, were it not superfluous, rewards should be offered. Yet by whom would they be claimed? Not by those entitled to receive them.—Instances of female ingenuity, fortitude, and heroism,

strike the more forcibly, from being apparently so little within the power of the weaker sex ; and we seek them in romance, from not expecting to find them in history. They are not wanting in the other sex indeed : if they be fewer, perhaps it is because it is commonly the husband, not the wife, who is most exposed to peril. But the history of the fairer part of the creation, is a splendid record of the finer emotions of the soul.

We admire the love of Artemisia in swallowing the ashes of her husband, and in erecting a mausoleum to his memory : but it is more admirable that she pined of grief, and followed him to the tomb.* Some individuals of both sexes, unwilling to be sundered in fervent attachments, have carried their regard farther than life, in refusing to part with the inanimate relicks. Embalmed with pious care, they have been carried to the same spot which should receive the mortal remains of both, or they have been kept perpetually beside the survivor, affording a melancholy pleasure in reminiscence of the virtues of the deceased.—How seldom are we serious amidst the smiles of fortune ! but gaiety vanishes of itself in her frowns ; and dark is the cloud that shades us from our beloved ; deep contemplations occupy the mind. We revolve in solemn reflection on the performance of our duties ; have we done all

* *Strabo*, lib. xiv. t. 2, p. 970. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. iv. c. 6. *Aulus Gellius*, lib. x. c. 18.

that was due to heaven, or that our fellows could demand? Those that shared our destinies are gone; but have not we been wanting? Shall we be enabled still to atone for omissions? If our best affections were bestowed, and we sedulously strove to render that one being happy of whom we are now deprived, while the world loses all its charms, a grateful consolation is felt in ministering to the offices required by mortality.

Pietro delle Valle, a Roman gentleman, traversed many of the Eastern countries very extensively during several of the earlier years of the seventeenth century, regarding which he has committed his observations to posterity. At Bagdad he became passionately enamoured of a beautiful and accomplished young Syrian, sprung from a distinguished family, whom he married in her nineteenth year, and pursued his travels through Persia. Passing along the banks of the Euphrates, he reached a small fortified town called Mina, within two days journey of the sea, where unfortunately his blooming partner sickened and died. Delle Valle was inconsolable: his loss was aggravated by the condition in which he was placed in a foreign land; he felt it to be irreparable. But, sustained by the principles of religion, so true a comfort to the afflicted, and wrapt up in his affections for the departed, whom he could not resolve to quit though no more, he determined to embalm her body. "I designed," says he, "to carry it to Rome for interment, in the ancient tomb

of my progenitors : or should I not be able to effect my return thither, her remains would be deposited beside my own, in whatever spot death might surprise me." Seven days were occupied in the necessary preparations, which Delle Valle found it difficult to have completed in so uncivilized a region, and which illustrates his perseverance in so pious a duty. " Meanwhile," he proceeds, " the body was preserved under one of my tents in a garden, where constant watch was kept to drive away the wild beasts. I myself, armed, guarded it whole nights, employing the time in prayers and hymns for the soul of the deceased, and reposing only a few hours of the day while others took my place. Alternate heat and cold then brought on a violent fever, reducing me very low ; but personal debility did not impair my mind. During the tediousness of the day, and amidst my shivering fits, in long nocturnal vigils, I gave vent to my sorrow ; for the tears streamed from my eyes, and I occupied myself in composing sonnets on the death of my beloved companion." Delle Valle overcame all the difficulties, however, and he renewed his journey, carrying the body of his wife along with him. Many disagreeable occurrences opposed the fulfilment of his design ; he had to travel as extensively as he had done previously, and through many strange countries ; and five entire years elapsed before he reached his paternal city Rome, where, according to his wish, he at length

deposited his departed spouse in the sepulchre of his ancestors. *

Is it not reproachful that, unless we have partaken in the obsequies of our friends, we can seldom point out the precise spot where their mortal remains repose? Ought we not to revive the recollection of those in whom we have felt an interest, by that easiest duty of casting a glance over the place of their inhumation? Artemisia, among the ancients, erected a wonderful mausoleum to the memory of her husband; a modern Empress, Maria Theresa, consecrated the spot of her partner's decease by an altar and a chapel enclosing it. †

But it is not by external demonstrations only that the most poignant sorrow is indicated; for the loss is mourned in silence until despair unites the survivor to the departed. Participation in the hardships and perils of either spouse is praise-worthy; to share their fortunes in death, seems a testimony of more than human constancy. Though the mind be so moulded as generally to admit of consolation, some have closed the present scene to join their partners in a better life: Panthea slew herself on the breast of her husband;‡ Paulina, the wife of the celebrated Seneca, refused to remain be-

* *Delle Valle*, Voyages, tom. v. p. 407. tom. viii. p. 249. She died in 1621, and was interred in 1626.

† *Eustace*, Classical Tour, Vol. I. p. 89. The Abbé *Frisi* has overlooked this fact in his Eulogium on the Empress.

‡ *Xenophon* de Institutione Cyri, lib. vii.

hind when he was compelled to suicide, and the same lancet opened the veins of both. But the capricious tyrant Nero ordered her wounds to be bound up after they had bled profusely.* The Grecian and Roman histories exhibit other instances, which are now reserved for another place. In later times, a Moorish woman prepared a funeral pile for her husband who had fallen in battle : and, inconsolable for his loss, she denied herself sustenance during nine days, that she might be united to him in immortality.† Some of the Northern Princesses, also, committed suicide for their husbands slain in war, and were consumed along with their remains on the same pile at Upsal.‡ Enlarging our enquiries, examples multiply upon us ; but centuries elapse in their respective countries without repetition of similar affection, where the mind is not as it were predisposed to it by education. For thousands of years disconsolate widows in the East have been seen ascending the funeral pile of their husbands to mingle their ashes together. Even those at an early age, who have the prospect of a life of felicity, who are attached to the world by their offspring, can wean themselves from the sweets of existence to embrace a death of torment. What are tears, and lamentations, and perpetual mourning, when compared with this he-

* *Tacitus*, *Annales*, lib. xv. c. 63, 64.

† *Lipsius*, *Monita et Exempla Politica*, c. 16.

‡ *Saxo*, *Grammaticus*, p. 13, 165.

roic devotion? What are the boasted courage and magnanimity of Greek and Roman matrons manifested in solitary instances, when compared with the numerous examples of constant recurrence, and among a people averse to courses inspiring fortitude or engaging the mind in illustrious pursuits; whose females also, timid as the most reserved, more earnestly shun the public gaze in prosperity than in this last sad hour of trial? Their conduct is fitted to fill us with amazement and awe.

The natural issue of the affection of the sexes is their union; but the more violent the attraction, the more mistaken those animated by it most probably will be in the result. Short-sighted mankind vainly expect what is merely the object of their wishes; having obtained it they believe that it shall have no end, that it shall last for ever. But tranquillity and agitation, by a kind of mutual recession, meet in that equilibrium or mediocrity which seems the universal régulator. Thence there is a likelihood that, according to the ardour of the attractive passion, it shall subside into indifference; and if there be not some bond of friendship, that it may terminate in aversion or disgust. The vehemence of a passion susceptible of the highest excess, instead of proving salutary to the sexes, might prove most pernicious; and although its original purpose were not defeated, the feeble frame of mankind could not resist its permanent effects with impunity. A temperate condition, or slow, gradual and moderate alternations, are most conducive to happiness.

Thus it may be inferred, that the union which originates in the warmth of friendship should be productive of greater comfort than where resulting from the vehemence of passion; for no vacuity will remain by its speedy subsidence to be occupied by other affections.

Certainly the fairest chance of felicity rests in a union with one only. Indeed it can be scarcely doubted that this is the divine purpose in so nearly equalizing the numbers of the sexes, and in denying the participation of genuine love: nor can it have the disapprobation of moralists, for the smallest societies are the least productive of vice.

Nevertheless the most singular opinions have been maintained by philosophers, and the most unnatural customs adopted by mankind relative to this the earliest appearance of the social state. Providence, according to some, has granted a general dispensation of his works to his creatures at large, of which the whole shall avail themselves; nor, unless for private advantage, are any to assume prerogatives or preferences over the rest. It is said to have been maintained by Socrates, that it would be more conducive to the well-being of society, were all things to be in common, not excepting those of which mankind are wont to hold the most jealous possession—their wives and children.* Plato,

* These are the doctrines delivered by *Plato*, which *Aristotle* ascribes to *Socrates*.

Chrysippus, Zeno, and Diogenes, recommended a community of wives, that all the children should be treated with equal affection, and that there should be no suspicion of conjugal infidelities.* Like many legislators, they postponed the self-evident dictates of nature to indefinite speculations on human convenience: and were the plan worthy of any notice, it would be to demonstrate that none could be devised more destructive of virtue, or more hostile to expected felicity. It has been seriously combated by Aristotle, and more copiously than the subject seems to merit;† for an essential preliminary, which the boldest never projected, would be reducing the passions of each individual to exactly the same standard, eradicating jealousy, and substituting indifference for parental love. Nevertheless the ancients actually record the names of certain tribes or nations admitting a community of wives. Such as the Massagetæ, who in every thing else resembled the Scythians; the Nasomenes, a great African people; and the Ausi, a Lybian race.‡ The Liburni, or Limyrnii, had a community of wives, and reared their children in common:§ the

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. vi. § 72. in vita Diogenis ; lib. vii. § 131. in vita Zenonis—in vita Pyrrhonis, § 83.

† *Aristotle*, *Politic.* lib. ii. cap. 1, 2.

‡ *Herodotus*, lib. i. § 216. iv. § 172. 180. pp. 101. 357. 360. This author seems to be copied, though incorrectly, by *Pomponius*, *Mela de Situ Orbis*, lib. i. c. 8.

§ *Valesius*, *Excerpta ex Nicolao Damasceno*, p. 515.

same is alleged of a country, supposed to be the modern Ceylon, and of a tribe of Ethiopians.* Among the former, the nurses were often changed, that mothers might not recognize their children; and the utmost harmony subsisted. During the wild speculations of the revolutionists of the preceding century, it is said that two printed memorials reached the National Assembly of France from this country, soliciting a law which should establish the community of wives.†

That sentiment which attaches us to an object beloved, seems to be accompanied by the confidence of our right to exclusive possession. In countries recognizing polygamy, affection centers ultimately in one: and so well aware are the inhabitants of this being the ordinary issue, that their legislators have endeavoured to counteract it, by permitting women to complain of the unequal distribution of the regard of their husbands. The union of two is of each for the sake of the other, and of that other only. How can affection be strong, if some portion of it may be successively withdrawn and bestowed elsewhere? Either the union must have been void of decided interest at first, or it must be now on the decline. The more numerous the objects of our benevolence, the smaller the portion of regard to be conferred on each: friendships, and the

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xi. § 58. tom. i. p. 570; lib. iii. § 24. tom. i. p. 192.

† *Robison*, *Proofs of a Conspiracy*, p. 470.

divisions of our affections, are weakened by their multiplicity. Those unnatural customs admitting the union of one man to many women, or of one woman to many men, which sanction the loan and transfer of wives, or those whereby a wife complacently witnesses another being taken to the arms of her husband, perhaps counselling it to be done, seem founded on some vicious moral principle, or possibly on certain superstitions.—Some remarks on the peculiarities of tribes and nations are necessarily postponed, for we are now speaking chiefly of the evolution and progress of the passions from natural propensities: but our notice is arrested by the indulgent wives of the patriarchs consenting to the participation of others in the affection of their husbands, from its great inconsistency with the right of exclusive possession. The same is related in regard to Livia and Augustus; and of the Queen of Valentinian. Deiotarus, tetrarch of Galatia, being childless, and destitute of heirs to succeed to his kingdom, his wife Stratonica persuaded him to associate a beautiful captive with herself, and she affectionately educated her children as her own, and in a distinguished manner.* In modern times we are told of a sister of the late Turkish emperor Selim III. who had married his favourite, that when the Pacha was remanded to his government of

* *Plutarch de Virtutibus Mulierum.* *Suetonius in vita Augusti*, § 71. *Historiæ Miscellæ*, lib. xii. ap. *Muratori Scriptores Rerum Italicarum*, tom. i. p. 82.

the Morea, "his indulgent princess selected twenty-five of the most beautiful of her suite, whom she presented to him."* But we must not hastily ascribe to a relaxation of the moral principle every fashion that is adverse to our feelings of rectitude. In illustration of the manners of the Jewish patriarchs, we may observe, that deceasing without posterity has been esteemed the greatest calamity in many parts of the world. The simple sterility of wives has exposed them to the most unjust humiliations, and it is likely that an unproductive family was beheld as a judgment of heaven, which might be averted by the subsistence of the husband's offspring. But the penalty has been always directed against the wife. By some of the ancient as well as the modern nations, she might be repudiated for this alone and no other fault. The missionary Marini says of the Tunkinese, that sterility is the greatest misfortune that can befall a wife; that she dreads it as a kind of infamy which will render her the object of public derision; therefore she advises her husband to take another spouse, and sometimes herself seeks out one who may please him.† Also, the Turkish women believing themselves under hopeless sterility, present a slave to their husbands, or purchase one for him; and the children thence born are regarded as those of their mistress, and are edu-

* *Dallaway*, Constantinople, Ancient and Modern, p. 141.

† *Marini*, Relation du Royaume de Tunquin, p. 155.
French Translation.

cated by her as such.* The Romans are said to have sanctioned the lending of wives: and similar fashions are still recognised in rude stages of society. "Among the Knisteneaux, a temporary interchange of wives is not uncommon:" and the author of the information relates an instance of a man who resigned his wife for three years to another, and then resumed her to himself.† A modern missionary reproaches a South American tribe with marrying wives who are separated at the distance of leagues, and scarcely seen once in a year, with repudiating them at pleasure, "and changing them as often as Europeans do their clothes."‡ Prohibition of the men from such privileges is said to have been one of the principal penalties imposed in the Spartan state, which alike evinces the absence of civilization and the debasement of the female sex.

So many qualifications are essential to the felicity of an indissoluble union, that we should rather consider their concurrence remarkable, than be disappointed at their deficiency. Men for the most part are tyrannical and unjust; slaves to their passions, selfish and deceitful, fawning and complaisant to obtain their ends, easily satiated of excellence, and dissatisfied with their enjoyments. Throughout the earth they are willing to domineer, and wherever

* *Maillet*, Description de L'Egypte, tom. ii. p. 87.

† *M'Kenzie*, Travels through the Continent of North America, p. xcvi. 143.

‡ *Dobrizhoffer*, Historia Abiponum, tom. ii. p. 219.

permitted, they hold the other sex in subservience. It is part of their system. The affection which attracts the sexes being liable to decay, if it does not subside into friendship there is evident danger of disquiet. Without awaiting this issue, however, in some countries it is chilled before it glows. A union is sought from motives of convenience: courtships are carried on as a kind of traffic: a father's wealth consists in the number of his daughters, or he negotiates at a certain price for a partner who has never been seen by his son, or betrothes his daughter in infancy. The Sultan Ibrahim had one who before the years of maturity was four times a widow, and for the fifth was bestowed on a venerable noble of fourscore. Let us look around at home; we shall reproach ourselves with the preference of accidental benefits to essential qualities, and with a criminal disregard of the primary ingredients in the felicity of those whom we would join in everlasting bonds. Actually it is wonderful that so much comfort prevails.

Conjugal infelicity is the earliest social calamity; for the junction of the two individuals is the first formation of the social state: and by an unhappy perversion of sentiment, the benevolent principles leading to it now effaced, the malevolent mental affections ensue. Little reflection would induce us to conclude for the probable conservation of the union under mutual satisfaction: and neither party undoubtedly anticipates an alteration which is to be destruc-

tive of peace: nor does Providence permit the penetration of futurity. But if man in all other circumstances be prone to usurpation, as assuredly is his general character, why should there be an exception here? The penalties attached to the weaker sex accompany them in every station and condition, mollified perhaps—they are never abrogated. Yet as endurance has its limits, and as aggression provokes retaliation, this, the only personal vindication, will inevitably follow to disturb the domestic tranquillity.

Valerius Maximus affirms, that on such occasions, among the ancient Romans, the contending spouses proceeded to the shrine of a certain divinity, and there having indulged in verbal warfare, all animosity was laid aside, and they returned home in good correspondence.* He also boasts that before a divorce was known the metropolis had stood 520 years, when one Carvilius repudiated his wife on account of sterility: “Yet he did not escape censure, though the cause assigned was reasonable; for conjugal faith should have been paramount to the desire of offspring.”† On discovery of this expedient, however, men readily availed themselves of it without much scruple, and at length many hastened to get quit of their wives. Very slight pretexts were

* The Goddess Viriplaca: *Valerius Maximus*, lib. ii. cap. 1. *De Matrimoniorum ritu*.

† *Dionysius Halicarnassus*, lib. ii. *Aulus Gellius*, lib. iv. cap. 3; lib. xvii. cap. 21.

held sufficient ; and it seems to have been frequently resorted to, merely for the purpose of entering into a new connexion. Judging from analogies, it could not be difficult to obtain, if partaking of innocent amusements were reprehended, and if one might consign his wife to a friend : “ Certain it is,” says Plutarch, “ that men usually repudiate their wives from great and visible faults : yet sometimes also a peevishness of temper, or incomppliance of manners, small and frequent distastes, though not discerned by the world, produce the most incurable aversions in a married life.” History, he continues, does not relate the cause why Paulus Æmilius divorced his first wife, who had brought him very fine children, and with whom he had lived long in wedlock ; but in regard to such separations, “ the account of a certain Roman seems to be a just one ; when his friends remonstrated, saying, *was she not chaste ? was she not fair ? was she not fruitful ?* he held out his shoe, answering, *Is it not handsome ? Is it not new ?*—yet none knows where it wrings him but he that wears it.”*

Nothing is more evident than that the incentives to the union of the sexes depicts it under the most imposing aspect : it is this which rivets their determination. The mutual attraction, if we may refer it to any definite source, is first and most powerfully elicited solely by external qualities. Mental

* *Plutarch in vita Pauli Æmilii.*

embellishments, those which gain a lasting empire; neither are disclosed, nor, on that account, can they have any influence. As little can they be appreciated by many, and undoubtedly the multitude do not set out in quest of them. What follows? An object constantly in view loses its novelty, which is no mean excitement of admiration: as it grows common, its beauties fade in our eyes; nor are they renovated to court our notice. The restless imagination which centered there, then begins to wander after something whereon it may again repose; for it has not been fascinated by the mind. Meantime reciprocal incongruities are betrayed: the attention of two individuals, who were united under the happiest circumstances, is directed to peculiarities formerly unseen, and points which at first never entered the imagination of either, and the result is unsatisfactory. The passion by which both were absorbed, if not previously allayed by possession, is rapidly abating: possibly one or other regrets precipitation: each may have been deceived in yielding to its vehemence: none but perfections visibly subsisted,—glaring defects are visibly disclosed. Would not a little coolness, even the shortest deliberation, have removed the film of delusion, and awakened them to a sense of their uncertainties?—Bitter disappointment! But it is now too late to retract: the evil is great and growing: Trifling annoyances beget fretful impatience, which, aggravated by reproachful remonstrances, become

intolerable in repetition : Forbearance is abandoned : and neither being content to yield, if both be fettered by an everlasting chain, they will spare nothing to burst their bonds and seek for liberty. But how shall it be procured ? Shame prevents exposure of this unhappy condition to the public gaze, and the laws put a negative on separation. Already domestic peace is broken ; the spouses are alienated from each other ; their affection, falling into indifference, has been converted into hatred ; and every hour that their compulsory union remains undissolved, renders it more and more disgusting. What an extraordinary close to one of the most delightful and endearing passions of the mind that can flow from the purest benevolence ! Yet is this the train insensibly conducting to the lethal draught, the midnight murder, severing those whom love had united, by atrocities such as would stagger the most inveterate foes in their commission. What a terrible affliction assigned to the lot of mankind, that, “ in-compliance of manners, small and frequent distastes, though not discerned by the world, produce the most incurable aversions in a married life !”

The felicity of wedlock, however, as of other human relations in general, evidently does not depend on personal attractions alone ; for beauty and virtue are not necessarily conjoined, but on qualities with which the virtuous are endowed.*

* *Xenophon*, *Oeconomicus*, in exhibiting the household arrangements of the Greeks, elucidates his discourse with some

Some nations, as if to render the monstrous crimes of parricide and fratricide still more revolting than nature tells us, have endeavoured to record the infamy of the first perpetrators among themselves. But, notwithstanding volumes could be filled with the reciprocal barbarities of spouses, by famine, fire, the sword, or poison, and the most cruel ingenuity in contriving extermination, nowhere are similar examples of the origin of conjugal destruction preserved. It began too early, it has continued too frequent, and it remains too late. Here also the tyrannical nature of man always breaks forth in acts of greater ferocity: the offences are lighter that kindle his wrath—his vengeance is more sanguinary. The jealous husband sacrifices his faithless wife: the injured wife rather seeks to be avenged of her favoured rival. The husband's superior strength empowers him to gratify his violence: unlike the weaker sex, he never shrinks at the sight of blood, and all his purpose is how the diabolical deed may be concealed. But women, incapable of effecting their desperate resolves by force, resort to insidious stratagems: they beguile their victim of life. Such unfortunately is the truth throughout most of the world; nor is frequency wanting to prove it. Scarcely a year elapses without the capital punishment of one or other spouse for this nefarious crime in Britain; and perhaps in the conviction excellent observations on the means of promoting mutual happiness.

that it can be more treacherously perpetrated by the wife, a higher penalty was levelled against her. *

Were it not interesting to study the evolution of the various mental affections, their shades and consequences, it might seem inconsistent to dwell so long on this and the preceding section; and perhaps it might appear absurd, though done with the best intent, to speak of remedies for domestic infelicity, especially as this unspeakable calamity, instead of being the subject of commiseration, is too often converted to a fund of amusement or derision by the heedless and unfeeling spectator. Let it be transiently observed, that it is repugnant to sound reason, that if two persons come to abhor each other, they shall be compelled to dwell together, and refused an unconditional separation. They consented to union in the belief of bettering their condition: they have been deceived; and if, instead of expected felicity, they find themselves plunged in misery, why shall they not be permitted to fly

* By the English law, women were condemned to be strangled and burnt; and after repeated examples of the infliction of this punishment, it was abrogated in the year 1790.—Thus it is recorded of Anne Ridgeway at Leicester in 1684,—Catherine Hayes in 1726,—Susanna Bruford, aged 19, who had been married only in March, at Cure Green, near Wells, in September 1753,—Anne Williams at Gloucester in 1753, who died protesting her innocence,—Anne Sowerby at York in 1767, and others. History has preserved the names of some celebrated female poisoners, as Trofania at Naples, and Le Voisin at Paris, whose assistance was readily granted for this horrid purpose.

from it? How, in this single case, is that inalienable right to comfort, which all possess, to be clogged by the most irrational impediments? The sense of dishonour, especially among the higher class, is generally so refined, that rather than consent to public exposure of domestic disquiets, both parties refuse a separation, still submitting to infinite inconvenience. But if ever the bond of union be actually sundered by this event, experience testifies the complete restoration of harmony to be extremely dubious, and that it is better the separation shall continue.—Next, if separation be profitable, what good cause can be assigned for the subsequent subsistence of the nuptial tie? Ought it not rather to be instantly dissolved? This common question is far from being of simple solution. Assuming that only a few individuals are harassed by domestic infelicity, we shall be inclined to assent to its expediency; but, on contemplating the rights and duties of those existing or yet unborn, and the effects which would be concomitant on its frequency, it becomes exceedingly difficult. Notwithstanding the unfavourable picture too often exhibited of incongruity of disposition in persons united, it seems very doubtful whether the absolute quantum of happiness in a country is to be augmented by the ready dissolution of wedlock. Extraordinary and revolting crimes, such as issue from long fomented animosities, together with incurable disgust, probably are averted; but the purity of morals, whereon

so much satisfaction depends, which is of such vital importance to the welfare of society, is confessedly deteriorated; nor are female independence, respectability, and comfort, promoted by the facility of divorce. Families are even in a state of greater contention and disquiet where divorces are obtained on the slightest pretences, and where they are so common that the character of the female is not affected.* Thus it is not to be concluded that their benefit is directly proportioned to their facility.

Nevertheless, every evil ought to have its remedy; and the most desirable of all, that which we will go the farthest to seek, is relief from a state of suffering. Superstitious, even pious persons sometimes mistake civil institutions for divine ordinances, and confound the general laws of nature with the petty regulations of mankind, for their own private conveniences. Therefore they consider voluntary separation, and much more the dissolution of the nuptial tie, as bordering on impiety, and contravening the will of heaven. They forget that maxim proving itself, that the goodness of the Omnipotent seems to will nothing except for human benefit.

On the whole, we ought less to doubt the expediency of dissolution, than to watch carefully against abuse of the privilege.

It has been seriously suggested that this union should be absolute only for a definite term of years,

* *Wilkinson, Account of Wallachia and Moldavia, p. 144.*

at the close of which each party should be free ; but that the contract might be renewed as often as both inclined. An infinity of other speculations have been indulged by the projectors of novelties.

Certain sects have strenuously denied the utility of wedlock, maintaining that it is neither of divine institution, nor tends to human felicity.* Some, in their zeal also, have proposed, to prohibit the union of those professing different religious opinions, that a Christian affianced to a Jew should be burnt or buried alive ; and such is said to have been the ancient law of England in the gloomy days of ignorance and superstition.† We read of the refusal of a sister of Richard I. to unite herself with a Saracen prince, a brother of the great Saladin, on account of his faith. The cruel fate of many native females for their late temporary association with the officers of our army after it was withdrawn from Egypt, is well known.

* *Baker*, Chronicle of the Kings of England, p. 58:—
 “Also in this King’s reign there came into England thirty Germans, men and women, calling themselves Publicans, who denied matrimony, and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, with other articles: who being obstinate, and not to be reclaimed, the King commanded they should be marked with a hot iron in the forehead and be whipped ; which punishment they took very patiently, their Captain, called Gerard, going before them singing, ‘Blessed are ye whom men hate.’ After they were whipped they were thrust out of doors, in the winter, where they died with cold and hunger, no man daring to relieve them.”—Temp. Hen. II.

† *Fleta*, lib. i. cap. 37. De Combustione Domorum.

Innumerable prohibitions were levelled against the intermarriage of kindred, entirely void of uniformity, as may be expected of legislators guided by mysterious prejudices instead of liberal opinions. But certainly the sentiments of mankind have exhibited no greater discrepancies than regarding who might or who might not join in wedlock. It is probable that the earliest stages of society must have been the least restricted, from their paucity of members; for whom could the sons of the author of our race marry but their own sisters? Yet other motives operated after mankind could dispense with that necessity. The sovereigns of the most flourishing states of antiquity married their sisters: and this is likewise affirmed of the more modern Peruvian monarchs, and of some of the semi-civilized insular tribes with which we have lately become familiar. Nothing of the kind has been sanctioned in Europe: for although a powerful nobleman, the Count D'Armagnac, married his sister publicly, and with much pomp, in France, in the year 1454, it was obviously adverse to all the established ordinances.* The moderns have been involved in greater perplexity concerning the right of marrying a sister-in-law, a fashion plainly adopted by the Jewish regulations, which we affect to follow. It was deemed reproachful to avoid it; and if a man refused his sister-in-law, the widow of a brother deceased,

* *Mezeray, Histoire de France, tom. ii. p. 657.*

she might publicly loose his shoe from his foot, and spit in his face, telling him she did so because he would "not build up his brother's house."—About the middle of the sixth century, Clotharius, king of the Franks, was requested by his queen to provide a suitable match for her sister Aregunda, as adding to the distinction he had conferred on herself. Clotharius repaired to the residence of Aregunda, and returning to his queen addressed her thus: "I have endeavoured to discharge your commission to obtain a rich and a prudent person as a match for your sister; but I could find nobody better than myself; therefore you will not be displeased to hear that I have married her:" to which the queen replied, "that is good which so appears in the eyes of my lord; only let thy servant live with the favour of the king."*—We cannot forget the licentious indulgence or the barbarous caprices of one of our former sovereigns, Henry VIII. who first married the widow of his brother, and then feeling himself fettered, pretended qualms of conscience until he could shake himself free. In some parts of the Asiatic and American continent, it is now held a duty to marry a widow in that relation; and if there be several brothers, it seems to devolve on the eldest.† But it is expressly related, that Attila, king of the Huns, actually married his own

* *Gregorius Turonensis Historia Francorum*, lib. iv. § 3. col. 142, 143.

† *Adair*, *History of the American Indians*, p. 190.

daughter Esca, "although he had several wives already, for that was permitted by the laws of the Scythians:" * thus following the counsel said to have been given more anciently by Parysatis to Artaxerxes. It is undoubted, that the marriage of immediate ascendants and descendants has been practised, but in general with uncertain approbation; and almost exclusively by the father and daughter, perhaps from that doubtful paternity which has always disturbed the confidence of mankind. Thus, in addition to the Scythians, it has been alleged of the ancient Medes and Persians, of the modern Druses of Mount Lebanon, and of certain Africans. † It does not seem to have been uncommon in the less civilized stages for a man to marry the mother and her daughter: nay, there is a barbarous Tartarian tribe of the present day practising polygamy, among which after the father's decease his eldest son may take all his wives, his own mother

* *Priscus*, *Historia Gothica*: The author, who seems to have been one of a legation to that king, relates, that this incident took place at a certain village, during a journey in which he accompanied Attila. He gives an amusing account of his entertainment at the royal residence, when the king drank from a wooden cup, but those of gold and silver were furnished to the guests.

† *Bosman*, *Description of the Coast of Guinea*, Letter 18: "The present king of Whydah married two of his own daughters," but they died soon after, which he believed an indication of the displeasure of the Gods.

excepted ; * so remarkable are the unrestrained fashions of mankind. Scarcely any general rule or uniform practice appears to have been observed. Possibly, however, solitary examples may have been mistaken for regular customs ; but the failure of explicit ordinances either has induced individuals in this country, as elsewhere, to endeavour to take advantage of them, or has admitted of their unwittingly exposing themselves to very severe penalties. “ In the same month of May 1621, Sir Giles Alington of Cambridgeshire married his own niece, the daughter of one Mr Dalton,” for which he was prosecuted in the High Commission Court, consisting of eight bishops and four others, “ whose sentence was to be fined to the King £12,000 : to stand obliged in the penalty of £20,000 never to cohabit or come near his niece any more ; and to be committed to prison, or put in sufficient bail till both he and his niece shall have done penance at Paul’s Cross, and at Great St Mary’s, Cambridge, at a day appointed by the court.” † So lately as the year 1675, a treatise was published in London, supporting the legality of the marriage of cousins-german. But it ought to be observed, that during the predominance of the Roman Catholic religion in Britain, the union of cousins several times re-

* *Klaproth*, Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia, p. 345 : speaking of the Great Ingusches. Others have ascribed the same to the earlier Arabs.

† *Baker*, Chronicle, p. 450.

moved was specially interdicted: and very calamitous consequences to those whom we now should account of distant kindred are said to have ensued, both here and in different parts of Europe, from neglecting the prohibition. They were excommunicated from the bosom of the church, no slight penalty considering its effects: for their innocent offspring were stigmatized as spurious, they were disabled from bearing testimony, or enforcing civil obligations: the contamination of their presence banished their dearest relatives and most intimate friends from their society: and, as abandoned to the displeasure of God, they were forsaken by men. Yet the papal absolution, that artful expedient for maintaining tyranny, could restore the favour of heaven, or a dispensation enabling the guilty to sin by privilege sanctioned an unlawful union, and could wipe out the stain.

The wisest philosopher, the ablest legislator, the most upright citizen, contemplating the instincts of nature and the result of the customs of the universe, would find it difficult, were he invested with absolute power, to fix the precise degrees of kindred, immediate descent excepted, which should vitiate the bond of wedlock from inconvenience only.

It has neither been from rational nor natural principles, that some alliances are brought under penalties: mankind, unless in a single instance, are originally entirely ignorant of their reciprocal relation-

ship : their conviction of it depends exclusively on the testimony of others : they might sin unwittingly. It seems equally cruel to propose burning a Jew for marrying a Christian, or to confiscate or excommunicate first and second cousins, as it seems repugnant to sanction the union of a father and his daughter. Men, in their short-sighted policy, become as much the contrivers as the avengers of crimes.

Where the parity of the sexes is nearly preserved, and where as yet the restraints of human ordinances, and the dark veil of prejudice or the lust of ambition has not disturbed the equilibrium, the mutual regard of the sexes terminates in their union, as fulfilling the most important designs of nature, and one of the original purposes of life.

§ 3. *Parental Love*.—Do not our children receive the same warmth of affection, whatever circumstances have led to their birth? Rank and ceremonies, proximity of kindred, the furthest inequalities, are all obliterated ; nay, the offspring of violence perhaps is embraced with equal ardour as the heir to the happiest fortunes. Our children are, as it were, a portion of ourselves, and in them we feel our existence regenerated. The grand intent of nature in inspiring the first of the benevolent affections is accomplished by their being, which awakens a new series of sensations unknown and unsuspected. Whether or not the majority of

mankind anxiously desire posterity, nature has taken sufficient precautions for conservation of the race. But it does appear, that, in general, progeny is our wish, either from expecting some greater credit, for comfort to our later days, or to serve as a memorial left behind us. Sterility, it has been already said, is felt a severe reproach; our race is to be extinguished with our own decay; we are refused that dispensation which others enjoy,—it is dreaded, especially by the weaker sex, as an evil of no trivial magnitude: Therefore they consent to many restrictions, privations, even to indignities, to avert it: and very frequently the permanent disappointment of progeny is productive of lasting domestic infelicity. Those to whom the blessing of parentage is denied, we also see may be exposed to still more cruel mortifications, the privileges of their condition withdrawn, their peace invaded, and misfortunes embittered by contumely: for the arrogance of man dares to attach penalties to the decrees of nature. Meantime if she wills it otherwise, and prepares to fulfil her own greatest designs, a thousand pleasing anticipations are indulged from the endearing name of parent.

We teach religion because mankind are impious, and instil morality as a corrective of their wickedness: but parental affection, filial veneration, and the love of kindred, are laws demanding no legislator; they are written in the breast of each individual in indelible characters, by the same fiat which

summons him into life. The new being, in separating from its mother, carries an integral part of herself along with it in her love. So consistent is it with the rules bestowing existence on the human race, that regard for relatives universally predominates over that for strangers; and even those austere and frigid sects who repressed the kind affections, agreed that tenderness for the nearest kindred should rank immediately after veneration of the gods.* Perhaps it is from this acknowledged bond that mankind are impelled to resent the injury of those dearest from their consanguinity, and to redress the wrongs of those remote who are incapable of avenging themselves. How intimate is the tie between the parent and the progeny! there is no connection to be held up in comparison. An unceasing interest, the most lively concern, is directed towards it, heightened by compassion for the dependence and helplessness of its early state. But it is the mother in whom this solicitude is most conspicuously displayed, from the first moment that the offspring lives until the last of the existence of either. Here again may be noted the secret agency of nature, the wonderful precautions of omnipotent dispensation. This provision is made, not because it is indifferent, but because it is of the highest moment in the great regulations of the universe. It is the mother only who thinks lightly of the

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. vii. § 119, 120, in *vita Zenonis*.

troubles she has undergone, who forgets the sufferings of having given her offspring to the day, and greets its existence with hallowed joy. But nothing less are her cares for its welfare, her anxieties for its preservation. Are not hour after hour devoted to minister to its infant necessities?—its wakefulness and repose are alike her watching—its pains are her own: but she has no weariness—her enjoyment in its smiles render her content to endure yet more than it has cost her, so that the precious gift remain for her endearments. Thousands of mothers have entertained all the ardour of maternal love, who have felt scarcely more than mere complacency towards the fathers of their children, who have received them coldly, or who have almost deemed them the objects of disgust or aversion.—Is it essential to the condition of the offspring that there should be the same demonstrations from the paternal tie? Nature has shewn that it is not, and on that account an equal vehemence does not exist. Thus all her regulations are wise, and suited to fulfil their precise purpose. Maternal affection, necessary to the safety of the progeny while expanding into form, is matured with its growth, and augmented, not impaired, by continued exercise. It incorporates the nascent being with the parent: it rouses all the dormant passions which, in their excess, shall tend to its security. The most timid female now becoming bold, will courageously defend her offspring, or willingly rush amidst perils for its

sake. When the Ajax man of war took fire in the straits of Bosphorus in the year 1807, an awful scene of distraction ensued. The ship was of great size, full of people, and under the attack of an enemy at the time,—the mouths of destruction seemed to wage in contention for their prey. Many of those on board could entertain no hopes of deliverance: striving to shun one devouring element, they were the victims of another. While the conflagration was raging furiously, and shrieks of terror rent the air, an unfortunate mother, regardless of herself, seemed solicitous only for the safety of her infant child. She never attempted to escape; but she committed it to the charge of an officer, who, at her earnest request, endeavoured to secure it in his coat; and following the tender deposit with her eyes as he retired, she calmly awaited that catastrophe in which the rest were about to be involved. Amidst the exertions of the officer in such an emergency the infant dropped into the sea, which was no sooner discovered by the unhappy parent, than frantic she plunged from the vessel's side as if to preserve it; she sunk—and was seen no more. Wretched mother! How cruel the conflict to part with so dear a pledge! How daring the resolution to save it, or to join its fate in despair!—Do we sufficiently appreciate our own lot, who, surrounded by our progeny, dwell in ease, and comfort, and independence?—Do we appreciate the lot of those who must be sundered from their children, or who are compelled

to dismiss them to encounter hazards in the pursuit of precarious fortune? Sometimes the hard-earned morsel is shared to meet the crying necessities of many: yet the reward of willing industry, the price of heavy labour, is not enough to lighten the parents' heart. Let us look around,—let us weigh the pains, the mortifications, and the profits of others, with those that fall to ourselves, and perhaps we shall find a wider field for commiseration than for envy. But from the equity in which human expectations may confide, is it not lamentable that the weaker, who merit succour, should be rather the devoted victim?—Alas! that so many disasters await our race: that so many hidden gulfs are eternally opening their ravening jaws to absorb the helpless, unable to contend with danger. The winds and the waves war against each other: but in their strife they unite to entomb the unresisting in a briny grave. It rends the very soul of the compassionate to reflect on the havock of each succeeding tempest: to learn of the same vessel perhaps, after safely returning from victory, that “there was a charming young woman on board with a beautiful child in her arms, whom she entrusted to one of the officers with these words, ‘O sir, God bless you! I am now quite happy, as you will save my child; for my own life is nothing if my dear child be saved. Pray keep it as warm as you can.’—She then gave him her cloak and what clothes she could convey to him. The poor woman was washed off the deck along with

her husband, and perished while in the act of parental tenderness: And the officer and the child soon found the same watery grave.”*

How admirable are that pious resignation, that empire over the desire of self-preservation, which maternal affection rouses amidst the conflicting passions of such unfortunate parents! While the tear of commiseration flows for their cruel destiny, it is this which in itself rears a glorious monument of their virtue.

Is it not extraordinary, that in those joyous circles composed of fair, youthful, and timid females, which we contemplate with mingled pleasure and admiration, each is prepared for the softest solicitude, ready to be inspired by the boldest resolution—to be converted to a heroine, merely when she shall become a mother? So does the wisdom of omnipotence strengthen the weak for the safeguard of the defenceless.

The paternal is weaker than the maternal tie. We say it is rational to conclude, perhaps, that it

* *Macdonald*, Travels through Denmark and Sweden, vol. i. p. 64.—This affecting incident happened when the *Crescent* frigate was totally wrecked on the coast of Denmark in winter 1808. The preceding anecdote was related to the author by an officer belonging to the *Ajax*, who witnessed the fact, and who with difficulty escaped the catastrophe. In Greenland “a mother has often been known to throw herself in the water when her child was drowned.” *Crantz*, History of Greenland, B. III. ch. iv. § 5.

should be so. None of the vital dependence of the offspring is felt; there is no reminiscence of the pangs of ushering it into existence; there is no consciousness of paternity. Neither, after having lived, can there be farther personal ministering to its life. All the relations between the father and the child are of later origin, they are less immediate and intimate: none of those associations between it and the mother belong to him, which affords some ground for argument against the permanent union of the parents being intended by nature. The love of the father is awakened for the offspring, either by his being acquainted that it is his own, and his believing that it is truly so; or by a transference of a portion of the love he bears for his partner to her progeny. That uninterrupted intercourse, and the continued attention to an object which is so well adapted to foster partialities, are wanting here: nor can affection be engendered in the breast of those who never or rarely behold their offspring, or are called on to provide for their wants, equally as by their constant presence and gratification. Likewise as yielding to the softer emotions is thought to border on effeminacy in men, possibly their parental tenderness is therefore repressed. In many instances the paternal tie, if not totally obliterated, is of the feeblest kind; it is doubtful if it strengthens with the lapse of years; but assuredly the maternal is little weakened, nor almost ever effaced. Fathers have conducted themselves towards their sons

in a way that would freeze the mothers with horror. Where nations have polished under the refinement of manners, the simple novelties of condition may render the son his father's rival; he may languish for the inheritance which is to be set apart for his enjoyment, and so may kindred love be chilled by jealousy. Nature, on the whole, certainly does not demand the same interest of the father as of the mother in the progeny: a comprehensive survey of the universe will satisfy us that it is the fact.

Nevertheless it would be erroneous to conclude, that paternal affection is not amply diffused throughout the world, whether inspired by the secret agency of nature, even before the offspring has seen the light, or from those associations which in delightful exercise shall cherish love. Nay, while some fathers have banished their children in austerity, others have sacrificed themselves and their all in their behalf: they have purchased happiness to them by invading their own. It is written as an admirable example of antiquity, that the son of Seleucus, king of Syria, became desperately enamoured of his stepmother, and, in the conflicting vehemence of his passion and the desire to conceal it, that he was threatened with a mortal distemper. Seleucus was overwhelmed with affliction at the prospect of losing an only son, and his whole family were alike grieved and confounded at a malady for which none could account. But the acuteness of the attending physician unravelled the mystery; for dis-

covering that the pulses of his patient quickened, that his countenance was flushed, and a tremor agitated his frame, as only one individual approached, he became master of the secret. When this was imparted to Seleucus, he, in the excess of paternal affection, was content to resign his queen to the arms of his son.* Such a concession must not be estimated by the moral principles of modern times, but by a sense of the generosity and the tenderness of the agent.

Many distracted mothers have perished for their children, and it is not improbable that the same could be told of fathers. The examples are rare, however, not only from the weaker affection perhaps, but from the lesser dependence and more unusual association with this than with the other parent. A traveller of the preceding century relates, that a rebellious viceroy in Syria, who was also a hereditary prince, consented to substitute himself for his son condemned to death, in order that the authority and inheritance of his family might be preserved from the overweening power of the sovereign who threatened its absolute extirpation.† More recently it is said, that a similar incident occurred during the iniquities of the French revolution, when the innocent and the guilty were equally obnoxious to its ferocious participators.

* *Valerius Maximus*, lib. v. cap. 7. De Indulgentia Patrum.

† *Lithgon*, Travels ad an. 1610, Part v. p. 201. Edit. 1640.

Lieutenant General Loizerolles was confined along with his son in the prison of St. Lazarus, awaiting their trial for some real or imaginary offence. An officer of the revolutionary tribunal having carried an indictment thither against the latter, who happened to be asleep at the time, the General, personating his son, arose and followed him: He was tried, condemned, and executed, on the day preceding the downfall of Robespierre, in the year 1794. Although an inconsistency appeared on the trial regarding the age and name of the accused, he persisted in the deception; and hearing his sentence, only exclaimed, "I have succeeded!" *

The conflict between paternal love and duty is a condition still more distressing than where the preservation of the one is to be at the expense of the other's life. But it is said that the sense of duty to the country operated so powerfully on the commander of a Spanish garrison in the fourteenth century, that to quell his mutinous soldiery he consented to the dishonour of his own daughters rather than surrender to an enemy: A shocking alternative, and how painful even those who are not parents may conceive! †

* Among the names of those sentenced 26th July 1794, is "S. Loizerolles, pere age 61 ans né a Paris, ancien Lieutenant General de Baillage de l'arsenal." *Moniteur*, 17th Aug. 1794, p. 1856.

† *Dillon*, History of the Reign of Peter the Cruel, vol. i. p. 141.

We see, therefore, that it is doubtful, whether paternal affection rises so often to the same excess as is displayed by mothers. The mother is never rivalled by her daughter; she is always an object of love and veneration to her son: but fathers and sons frequently are brought on near equality.

Notwithstanding the ardour of parental regard be derived from nature, it is fostered and encouraged by opportunities for its exercise. Perhaps it is no farther different from the ordinary sympathetic affections founded on benevolence, than in remounting to the earliest existence of its object, and in being coupled with an imperative duty, of which the necessity is always acknowledged on the one side at least, and accompanied with pleasure in its discharge. Consciousness of paternity awakens a train of sensations that ripen into love; but it seems exceedingly questionable whether there be any such internal monitor as shall disclose the unknown truth; whether the parent actually feels an extraordinary tenderness for the real over the supposititious child whose origin is unsuspected. Narratives sufficiently conclusive indeed abound in works of fiction, but here the evidence of genuine history is yet defective.

No tuition can enforce the demonstrations of parental love: it is taught by the ordinances of nature, and expected by the feelings of mankind: for the very instinct of the brute creation is held forth as superior, in reproach of those who seem to have

none. But education can chill the warmest emotions. The Spartan mother learned not to weep for the death of her son, who had fallen in battle: "Brasidas was a good man," she replied to one extolling him above the rest, "but much inferior to other Spartans in valour."* Xenophon removed the garland from his head during the celebration of religious rites when told the fate of his son who fell in the field of Mantinea, but replaced it on hearing that he had perished courageously: and he took the Gods to witness, that the joy he felt for his reputation exceeded the grief he suffered for his loss.† Yet we would rather sympathise with the affliction of parents for privation of their children, than unite in their rejoicings for glory. The mother who still can weep for her son, speaks more to the heart than her tearless and patriotic fortitude.

Inveterate habits, combined with the force of education, and the circumstances incident to the condition of mankind, alter our genuine nature: for the regard of the nearest relatives, and the tenderest connections, may be diminished almost to extinction. In some countries the wife never resides in her husband's dwelling: he visits her by stealth, as if ashamed of his love: or he keeps a perpetual guard over her, as if suspicious of her fide-

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xii. cap. 74. t. 1. p. 530.

† *Valerius Maximus*, lib. v. cap. 10. *De Parentibus Fortibus*.
Diogenes Laertius, lib. ii. § 54. in vita Xenophontis.

lity: it is indecorous of a stranger to name her in his presence. “ In Circassia, a prince reddens with indignation when he is asked concerning the health of his wife and children, makes no reply, and commonly turns his back on the enquirer in contempt.” On the third day after the birth of his son, he commits him to the care of one of his nobles; nor does he ever see him again until entering into the wedded state: the sons of the nobles are committed to the care of foster fathers, on whom also the most important cares of paternity devolve. Hence the utmost indifference subsists among relations, and the ties of affinity are weakened, if not altogether dissolved.*

But the frigid policy of other states violently bereaves tender mothers of their offspring, of the object of all their loves and cares. In a territory on the coast of Africa, no sooner can a child dispense with parental aid than it is torn from the arms of its mother, and sent to a distant village, as the property of the state, where she has scarcely the chance of ever recognizing it. The parent, therefore, instead of cherishing, represses her maternal love, knowing how speedily the bond of affection is to be broken.† Yet we cannot credit that this

* *Klaproth*, Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia, p. 320:— The wives of the Aurucanians live separately. Whoever is desirous of learning their number, enquires of the husband how many fires, that is, how many huts he has.

† *Dalzel*, History of Dahomy, p. 122. *Report to the British Parliament on the Slave Trade*, Part I.

unnatural separation is effected without a pang; for we are told that the rudest of mankind belove their progeny; and that those who stand in all the various stages of civilization, feel an equal interest in their fortunes. Misery indeed weakens every tie; for under it we not only become indifferent to others, but to ourselves. Among the less cultivated nations, and even among some of the civilized, both ancient and modern, by a monstrous violation of the parental tie, it has not been uncommon for fathers or mothers to put a price on their children, and deliver them over to those with whom they might never see them again. "Sitting one morning in my viranda," says a late author regarding the coast of Malabar, "a young fish-woman brought a basket of mullets for sale. While the servant was disposing of them, she asked me to purchase a fine boy, two years of age, then in her arms. On my upbraiding her with her want of maternal affection, she replied, with a smile, that she expected another in a few weeks; and as she could not manage two, she made me the first offer of her boy, whom she would part with for a rupee. She came a few days afterwards with a basket of fish, but had just sold her child to Signor Manoel Rodriguez, the Portuguese linguist, who, though a man of property and a Christian, had thought it necessary to lower the price to half a rupee. Thus did this young woman, without any remorse, dispose of an only child for fifteen pence."*

* *Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 392.*

In a more northern part of India, the lower ranks, without scruple, dispose of their children for slaves to any purchaser, and this for a very trifling consideration. Nothing is more common than to see a mother dress up her child and bring it to market, with no other hope, nor any other view, than to enhance its value in the eyes of a purchaser.* Can we credit that human nature is constituted of the same principles in the East as in the Western parts of the world? Can we believe that those very people who refuse to kill an animal, yet inflict frightful lacerations on their own bodies, and distort their members into unnatural postures, so that they never can be reduced to their proper shape, consist of the same corporeal substance, and are endowed with the same mental faculties as ourselves? Did not we know that the flexibility of the human mind admits of the utmost pitch of exaltation or degradation, and that there is nothing too extravagant for the participation of mankind, we should throw a shade of incredulity over all such narratives. We might almost doubt whether parental affection be truly the work of nature. Let us advance still a little farther in the East. In a flourishing and populous empire, there are men who marry women already pregnant, in order to enjoy the pleasures of paternity! †

* *Turner*, Account of an Embassy to Tibet, p. 11.

† *Bissachere* Exposé Statistique du Tunkin, p. 61. This remarkable custom is ascribed entirely to the desire of a more numerous posterity. A tribe in the neighbourhood of the

What a contrast is there between the cold and unfeeling separation from those whose innocent prattle is calculated for the mother's delight, and the tender love of the unhappy parents, who, amidst the devouring flames of the Ajax, and the billows swallowing up the Crescent, were willing to share the common ruin provided their infants could be spared !

Continued association of children with their parents, however, does not seem a portion of the grand design ; for it rather is to be concluded that one chief purpose of existence is for the founding of another family.

We consent to part with our offspring only for their profit, not for ours ; but the customs of countries can reconcile parents to separations for their own personal advantage. The wealth of a father, particularly among the Caucasian and Mongolian tribes, is estimated by the number of his daughters ; for on the marriage of each he receives what is deemed equivalent to her personal recommendations. It is he that betrothes to each other children yet unborn,

Caspian Sea, called "Tapyri, were accustomed to take for their wives those of other men after having had several children" to their husbands. *Strabo*, lib. xi. tom. ii. p. 783.—A contest for the paternity of the expected offspring of a dissolute female, who nevertheless enjoyed distinguished reputation, having arose between the Count d'Etrées in France and the Abbé d'Effiat, they agreed to determine the honour by drawing lots. Fortune was favourable to the former.

and to him that the dowry is paid. The ancient patriarchs purchased their wives by a term of servitude: but the consideration of the moderns is given in goods or cattle. *

Thus by the natural progress of parental love, its vehemence will prompt the parent to perish for the child: but all regard may be eradicated in its decline; and here also an inversion follows, which urges to deeds in violation of humanity, and of the duties most imperative on mankind.

The extent of infanticide throughout the world exceeds belief: it forms part of the established code, the accepted customs, and is committed free of reproach, rather acknowledged as a suitable remedy in some nations than condemned as a criminal action. Its sources actually can be systematically arranged under four different heads,—superstition, necessity, the sense of dishonour, and the pursuit of pleasure. † The discussion of these would conduct us to a singular and interesting enquiry, but it would occupy too great a portion of this work: therefore let us

* *Klaproth*, Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia, p. 286. 319. This is sometimes called the price of blood. *Pallas*, Voyages dans Plusieurs Provinces de l'Empire de Russie, tom. ii. p. 197; tom. v. p. 141. 172. *Dobrizhoffer*, Historia Abiponum, tom. ii. p. 214. *Creuxius*, Historia Canadensis, p. 68.

† Where mothers nurse their children several years, their husbands frequently marry other wives; an evil sometimes endeavoured to be avoided by infanticide.—*Dobrizhoffer*, tom. ii. p. 221.

briefly observe, that it is almost invariably restricted to the infantile condition; that the leading causes are necessity and shame; two which perhaps are the more pardonable, as existence under either is misery: Superstition still operates, but more feebly than of old, and the pursuit of pleasure is bounded in narrow regions. But the condition of the weaker sex is so cruel, that among certain tribes, mothers, entertaining the utmost tenderness for their progeny, deem the destruction of daughters an act of mercy, because permitting them to live is to inure them to wretchedness. A missionary dwelling with the South Americans, having reproached a woman with this unnatural proceeding, she replied to the following purport: "Father, if you will allow me, I shall tell you what passes in my mind—would to God that my mother, when she brought me forth, had shown as much regard and compassion for me, as to have spared me the pain I have hitherto suffered, and must continue to suffer until the end of my days. Had she buried me when I was born, I should not have felt death, and she would have preserved me from all I am indispensably subjected to, as well as from labours more cruel than death is terrifying. Alas! who knows the troubles awaiting me before it arrives? Can a mother do any thing more profitable to her daughter, than save her from multiplied disasters, and a slavery worse than death. Would to God, father, I repeat would to God that she who gave

me life had testified her affection, by depriving me of it at my birth : my heart would have had less to endure, and my eyes less to weep." The calamities inflicted by the ferocious usurpations of the stronger over the weaker sex are intolerable : but they are not confined to any district, or to any nation ; for the tendency to domineer, though restrained, is universal. It is witnessed in opposite extremities of the globe. " Here," says another, a traveller in the Indian peninsula, " the unfeeling Canarese sees, without emotion, the lovely partner of his bed toiling all day, unassisted, in every species of domestic drudgery ; and having prepared his meal, eats by himself in sulky silence, and leaves her to her solitary repast. If they live on the produce of a garden, the labour of cultivation falls to her share : he sits at home, and, stupified with opium, deigns not, when she returns from her work, to give one smile of approbation, or one cheering word to lighten the labours of the day. On a journey, he mounts a bullock ; she, with a child in her arms, pants after him to drive it ; while he, regardless of her fatigue, conceives it not his duty to ease her of the additional load, the produce of the only passion he seems susceptible of." * Yet this is a gentle fate compared with the condition of the wife who must become the servant of her successor ;

* *Moore, Narrative of the Operations of Captain Little's Detachment, p. 287.*

where, as in Mingrelia, the husband may thus multiply his household at pleasure : * Nor had the American female, who resumed her grievances, enumerated the worst. “ Our husbands go to the chace with their weapons, that is all their labour ; we, on the contrary, are laden with one infant at the breast, and another in a basket : they go to kill a bird or a fish, we have to cultivate the ground : and when they return home without any burden, we have to carry provisions in addition to our children. In the evening they divert themselves with their friends, while we are loading ourselves with wood and water to prepare a meal for them ; when they have ate they sleep, but we have to watch during the night to prepare their liquor. They drink ; and becoming intoxicated, they beat us or drag us about by the hair. Ah, father, ! would to God my mother had buried me alive the moment I was born. You know yourself the truth of my complaints, for you witness it daily. Then after a poor Indian woman has served her husband like a slave, she is at length despised by him, and after twenty years he takes a younger wife, who maltreats her children or herself, and if she complains she is silenced with scourges. Can a mother do better than deprive her daughter of existence ? ” † — Still it is human nature to hope the

* *Zampi*, Relation de la Colchide et de la Mingrellie, cap. xviii.—The same has been said of the Siberians on themselves finding younger wives for their husbands.

† *Gumilla*, Histoire de l'Oronoque, chap. xxxii. *Voyage a la Guiane et a Cayenne*, p. 148.

best, nor do mothers destroy their children so much for the purpose of preserving them from the evil of life, as to be relieved of the extraordinary difficulties which would be superinduced by their survivance; natural affection, indeed, would tell them to share their scanty portion of sustenance, could it admit of partition: but hardships blunt the feelings, and corrupted, if it may be so denominated, by fashion, the parent yields to necessity.

We shall pass over the pursuit of pleasure, which in enervating the mind, alienates it from all rectitude, and superstition which steels it against wisdom and justice. The victims exacted by the latter have amounted to myriads. Mothers have offered up the blood of their own innocents to those horrible demons, whom perverted imagination fancied protecting divinities—they have forgot their agonies, and soothed their complaints lest the sacrifice might thereby prove the less acceptable.*

Where neither superstition, the immoderate love of pleasure, nor the calls of necessity, surmount the dictates of nature, there is yet another species of warfare waged against maternal tenderness in the dread of shame†—a sentiment so appalling, that no

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xiii. § 86. t. i. p. 610; lib. xx. § 14. t. ii. p. 415. *Plutarch* de Superstitione. *Eusebius* Prepositæ Evangelicæ, lib. iv. cap. 15. *Moore*, Hindu Pantheon, p. 353.

† Infanticide resulting from the pursuit of pleasure is practised by a society in the South Sea Islands, of persons calling themselves Arreoyoys, of which many modern navigators treat.

restraints will fetter mankind from deeds which shall preserve their reputation. If the affliction of losing our children by the common course of mortality be acute, how much more poignant must it be when, to screen us from contumely, we are compelled to be their destroyers! Do we feel for the pang of separation while reproaching the unfortunate mother with inhumanity, who, struggling to keep her secret, and save her offspring, exposes it in hopes of succour from some compassionate stranger? To her it may be eternal. In no country is parental affection stronger: among no race of people will the authors of their being do more for their progeny than in our own; yet do we sometimes witness those sad catastrophes from a sense of dishonour, which make our hearts bleed. If an unhappy mother has yielded to the seductions of treacherous man, who is it that palliates her frailty, who stretches forth the hand of charity and benevolence, who will avert the shaft of detraction, or wash out its stain? The world seems armed against her. If the prospect be so cheerless, and the danger so imminent, more than human resolution must come to her aid. This, alas!

Probably the destruction of all the daughters of the tribe of Jarejah Rajeputs, so lately practised, may have originated in superstition; yet as it subsisted in later years, it can be referred to custom only. The parents, even the mothers, were utterly unconscious of offending nature, and reluctantly abandoned their usages.

is granted to few. A terrible conflict arises between affection and shame: the dread of mankind predominates: the hand of the parent is lifted against her child, in the trembling hope that still she may be sheltered from dishonour. But is it not the fruit first of our treachery and arrogance? Yet its second part may be wanting: for of all the lamentable spectacles which we can be called to witness, the most afflicting is to behold the life of a mother forfeited for having taken the life of her offspring.

But let us leave this branch of our subject, too painful for discussion, to advert to another less so, because unconnected with falsehood and scorn.

Criminality is of various shades, according to the motive: though not excusable, we may be driven to deeds which the heart disavows; but guilt is of a different complexion where it comes of wanton wickedness. A father has left his son to perish by the hands of an enemy, because imperious duty forbade his relief: a mother has sacrificed her innocent to save herself from dishonour. These actions are of another hue than those of a haughty commander, who supports his rule, and condemns his own son, under pretext of military discipline, who frees himself of his progeny because they would be a burden; or of ambitious mothers, who treacherously bereave their children of existence to gratify a boundless thirst for dominion. So is it written of Laudice, in regard to five sons of six whom she

bore to the king of Cappadocia, and of another barbarous mother, a queen of Syria, whose son discovering the design, turned her weapons of destruction against herself.* The ancients, even private individuals, had absolute power over the lives of their children,† but, unless while they were in infancy, it was seldom exercised.‡ Naturally it must have been so, and must ever be so, among mankind: yet a few exceptions have sullied the page of history. As they for the most part belong to antiquity, and all are notorious, their merits have been discussed in other places. Invariably, however, it will be observed, that whatever is in opposition to natural duty, will be viewed with doubtful approbation. The reasoning of mankind on the most obvious fact resolves into simple principles—is it right, or is it wrong? It is the natural duty of parents to cherish and protect their children, and to pardon their errors, as it is the moral duty of mankind to sustain each other, to pity, console, and alleviate affliction. The son of Titus Manlius the Roman consul, taunted by an enemy, rushed precipitately to the combat, in defiance of his father's will, and exultingly returned with the spoils of the slain; but the commander angrily averting his face, ordered the troops to be assembled, and, reproaching his son with the subversion of military

* *Justin*, lib. xxxvii. cap. 1. ; lib. xxxix. cap. 2.

† *Dionysius Halicarnassus*, lib. ii. cap. 4.

‡ *Noodt*, Julius Paulus, sive de partus expositione et nece apud Veteres.

discipline, he declared that either the authority of the consuls should be for ever annulled by his impunity, or sanctioned with his death; and concluded with commanding him to be bound to a stake. All were shocked at the atrocious order; each viewed the axe as if raised against himself, and universal silence prevailed, rather from dread than discipline. But on beholding the blood flow from the mutilated trunk of the victim, the whole loudly deplored his fate; nor was their pity unmixed with execrations. Covering the body of the youth with the spoils, they burned it with all the honours which the regard of the army could testify. Their commander at the conclusion of the war repaired to Rome, where none but the aged were ready to welcome him; and the young, both at that time and always after, held him in detestation.* Could the man who destroyed his own son meet with love and favour? Some other instances of paternal severity appear among the same people, as of Brutus, who in their early history promoted the condemnation of his two sons for a conspiracy, and witnessed their execution; in the succeeding century of Aulus Posthumius the dictator, and long afterwards of Aulus Fulvius, for his son joining the daring conspirator Catiline.† It is written, that Maleus, a

* *Livy*, lib. viii. cap. 7, 12. *Sallust*. *Bellum Catilinarium*, cap. 52.

† *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xii. § 64. tom. i. p. 522. In his erat Fulvius Senatoris filius, quem retractum ex itinere parens

Carthaginian general, having been unsuccessful in war, his countrymen forbade his return ; and at the same time pronounced him an exile. Maleus and his army endeavoured to excuse themselves for their adverse fortune, but their missions were treated with contempt at Carthage ; they were driven to despair, and besieged the city. Meantime Cartalo, the son of the exiled leader, who had been sent to Tyre with offerings from the spoils that Maleus had captured, returned from thence to Carthage, passing by his father's camp in the way. Being summoned to attend Maleus, he answered, that he would first discharge the offices of religion, and then those of private duty. Maleus, though deeply offended, could not interfere with the former ; but some days after, when Cartalo came to him under an escort, adorned with purple and all the insignia of the priesthood, he took him aside and reproached him with the splendour of his decorations, considering the untoward state of those among whom he had come. " What do you display," said he, " in that purple and these coronets, but the tokens of my victories. ? Since you recognize me your father only as an exile, it is fitting that on my part I should judge you rather as a military commander than as a parent ;—and I shall make you such an example, that none hereafter will deride a father's

necari jussit : *Sallust. Bell. Cat. c. 39. Valerius Maximus, lib. v. cap. 8 : Qui Severi adversus liberos, § 5.*

calamities." So saying, he ordered that he should be crucified on a very lofty cross, in view of the city.* In the preceding examples military discipline sanctioned paternal resentment; in this, the dereliction of filial veneration, the absence of a suitable feeling for his misfortunes, and Cartalo associating himself with the enemies of Maleus, drew down parental vengeance.

Events which occur in presence of the multitude may be proved to the satisfaction of posterity; those which are removed from the gaze of the public, must be the subject of doubt among the most intelligent contemporaries. Three examples may be cited, observing however, that the interior of courts, and the distance of time, oppose elucidation: but reminding us, how seldom the privilege of infanticide is abused where it is not prohibited. Constantine, the first of the Roman emperors embracing Christianity, is charged with accession to the death of his own son Julius, whom the Empress Faustina, disappointed in her criminal passion for him, accused of

* *Justin*, lib. xviii. cap. 7. The learned dispute whether Maleus hanged his son or crucified him: and they also dispute whether the latter punishment was in general by binding or nailing. The truth probably is, that both were practised. It is commonly supposed, but very erroneously, that the scourging of Jesus Christ was to aggravate the punishment. But this seems to have been part of the sentence of those condemned to a capital pain, and very likely it was often remitted. The barbarous sentences lately acknowledged in France, and even in this country, especially in treason, enjoin various severities and indignities which have not been always inflicted.

having endeavoured to dishonour his father. Julius was banished to Pola in Istria, where it is said he was compelled to swallow poison: but the inhabitants believing his innocence, celebrated his obsequies magnificently.* The death of Don Carlos, the heir to the crown of Spain, in the sixteenth century, has been charged to his father Philip II. a gloomy and fanatical sovereign. But the causes and relation are alike obscure; and there is reason to conclude that imagination has filled up some chasms of the defective narrative. His father, however, decreed him a splendid funeral, which he is said to have beheld from the windows of his palace.†

The circumstances connected with another catastrophe of the same kind, seem somewhat better authenticated.

Peter I. of Russia, a man of vigorous and enterprising genius, found his empire far behind the other states of Europe, and adopted every means to render it great and powerful. He encountered personal labours to become personally skilful, he cultivated the arts and sciences, he encouraged the meritorious, and liberally rewarded both strangers and subjects, from whom he expected to add to the glory of his dominions. The strength of this boundless

* *Zosimus*, *Historiæ Novæ*, lib. ii. *Zonaras*, *Annales*, lib. xiii. cap. 2. Some authors have doubted this fact, from the panegyrics bestowed on Constantine. He is greatly indebted to his religion for his character.

† *Brantome*, a contemporary, says, there were 32 articles of accusation against him.—*Œuvres*, tom. iv. p. 324. Edit. 1787.

empire being consolidated on a firm basis, and a stimulus given to civilization, he expected that its weight, importance, and dignity, were to be equally interesting to his successor, and as carefully preserved. Peter had a son, Alexis, who might have occupied a private station without much discredit, but in whom all the qualifications for sovereignty were defective. Sustaining his elevated rank was oppressive; devoted to the pleasures of private sociality, he felt no taste for fastidious distance from his friends in the pomp of royalty: he was given besides to luxury and licentiousness, which, if escaping censure in private, would have been notorious in an emperor. His father, liberal and enlightened, is said to have attempted to reclaim him: but he proved irreclaimable; he had no ambition for dignities; he even desired to be set aside, judging himself unfit for government; and when allowed his choice of succession or retirement to a monastery, he declared his preference of the latter. At length he fled from Russia, and so secretly, that some time elapsed before the place of his retreat could be discovered. Being brought back, many heavy accusations were supposed to be proved, for which he was adjudged by the law as deserving of death. A number of unfortunate persons were implicated along with him: for it never has been difficult for an arbitrary monarch to enlarge the circle of constructive treasons. Peter might have pardoned Alexis: but his death was sudden; and it is be-

lieved that he was compelled to swallow poison. Like his predecessors in misfortune, he had splendid obsequies; and the emperor published a manifesto, in which the unworthiness of his son formed the leading topic, together with maintaining the absolute power of parents over their children.

It is vain for men, whatever be their pretensions, their rank, or station, to look for applause, unless the feelings of the great mass of society sympathize with their conduct. If they violate the conservative laws of nature, they never will be free of reprobation. Did we distinctly know the public opinion, on occurrence of the three events now alluded to, at times so remote as the years 324, 1568, 1717, probably they would be found nearly coinciding. All would lean to mercy in such cases between parents and children: they would scarcely listen to pleas of state necessity. After Irene put out the eyes of her son Constantine, "the sun did not shine for seventeen days. The heavens were dark and gloomy, which I know not," says Zonaras, "whether it ought to be ascribed to chance, or to the resentment of divine Providence at an injury done to her son by his mother." *

Severity can be rarely approved, but mercy, a glorious attribute, becomes duty in regard to those offenders, be they really so, standing in such near relation to ourselves. Affection, if the object be

* Zonaras, *Annales*, lib. xv. cap. 13.

not altogether unworthy and debased, surely ought to predominate. Some have thought they had right to more obedience and consideration than they really merited, and for what to the public would appear venial offences, have vowed eternal displeasure against their children. Proud of their authority, they refused to admit any infringement of it; they denied a son or a daughter that gratification from which was expected comfort in life; and because neither would be restrained, unjustifiably denounced their crime unpardonable. Mankind are not entitled to go to such extremities: on the contrary, parents are bound to please and to satisfy the innocent desires of their offspring. *

§ 4. *Filial Veneration*.—But such are the anxious cares of the authors of our being, so patient their watching the hours of weakness and infancy, so warm their desire to cherish our welfare, that we can neither acknowledge nor compensate the benefactions conferred upon us. No adequate demonstration of the gratitude and reverence we owe them lies within the farthest compass of our power: and after all that we shall strive to express, to pay or perform, still the most of what we are due re-

* Amidst the wide field of infanticide, history has preserved some remarkable instances, such as one at Ewell in Surrey about 1621; *Taylor's Works*, p. 137; and another in 1819 or 1820, when a monster in the United States of America destroyed his whole family.

mains to be done. Should not the love which they bear for their children be reflected on themselves? Ought we not at least to be animated with a reciprocal affection for our parents, though wanting the means of shewing it? Yet it must be confessed that this does not appear to be an object so intently contemplated by nature, perhaps from being deemed less essential than the other. It rather seems a moral duty awakened in the meditative, by the habits of association, or the consciousness of rectitude. Filial veneration ranks with the highest virtues: of itself it begets esteem: its violation excites abhorrence: for nothing is more repugnant to our feelings, more offensive to our principles, more hateful to behold, than the disrespect of children towards their parents. It is an irreversible obligation, a duty so imperative, that they who wantonly disregard other things, divine and human, cannot dare to infringe it; for a sin of such magnitude appals the wicked. But it is here, as in those softer virtues, amiable in speculation and sanctified in practice, that females are more particularly distinguished by love and veneration of the authors of their existence. Irresistible evidence compels us again and again to admit, that in every condition where the feelings may freely operate, they are the better portion of the human race. Poets are obliged to feign Æneas loading himself with his aged father to escape the flames of Troy, and they call him pious: but daughters have no need of the embellishments of fiction;

their piety will shine wherever there are parents to be succoured. They are their delight in infancy, the comfort of their age, the companions of their fortune, the consolation of their affliction.* The mother of a woman in humble life being condemned at Rome, the jailor, rather than execute the sentence, wished from humanity to let her perish of famine. Meantime no one but her daughter was admitted to the prison, and that after she was strictly searched. But the curiosity of the man being aroused by the unusual duration of her survivance, he watched their interview, and discovered the daughter, affectionately nourishing the author of her days with her own milk. The people among whom this incident occurred were not insensible of its virtue, and a temple dedicated to Piety was afterwards erected on the spot. So was an aged father, under similar circumstances, preserved by similar means: he too was thus nourished by his daughter—*Hærent ac stupent hominum oculi cum hujus factam pictam imaginem vident.*† Should they have testified such surprise at the performance of a

* It is worthy of remark, that Augusta de Mist, the youngest daughter of a late Dutch Commissary General at the Cape of Good Hope, accompanied her father in a toilsome and perilous journey of thousands of miles through the mountains, rivers, and wilds of Africa: resting alternately under a scorching sun, and amidst the haunts of the most savage animals.—*Lichtenstein*, Travels, vol. i. p. 10; vol. ii. p. 106.

† *Pliny*, Historia Naturalis, lib. vii. cap. 36. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. iv. cap. 4. de Pietate in Parentes.

duty? Were it not a divine precept, it would seem superfluous to inculcate the reverence of parents, or that must have been a reprobate race requiring any injunctions: for after the duties of religion, “such honours as are lawful are reserved for living parents, as to them the earliest and the highest debts are owing.”* It has fallen to the more uncommon lot of daughters to redeem the remains of their parents from the hands of their enemies, and to preserve them from indignity. Crispina, the daughter of Titus Vinius, who was slain in the conspiracy of Piso, redeemed his head, which the assassins had kept to be sold.† In our own country, Margaret, the daughter of the celebrated Sir Thomas More, redeemed the head of her father, which had been exposed on London Bridge, after he had suffered for alleged treasons against the tyrant of his times. If the ancients so highly celebrate as an act of filial piety Cimon entering the prison where his father had died, that his body might be redeemed, and thence argued his future greatness;‡ how would they have estimated that Spanish youth, who offered to take his father’s place when condemned by Peter the Cruel, and actually was allowed to suffer!§

* *Plato de Legibus*, lib. iv.

† *Tacitus*, *Historiæ*, lib. i. cap. 47.

‡ *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xx. tom. ii. p. 559. *Justin*, lib. ii. cap. 15.

§ *Dillon*, *History of the Reign of Peter the Cruel*, vol. i. p. 98.

Solon did not enact any law against parricide, because he denied that such an outrage against nature could exist. But Plato, a more profound philosopher, saw that from man's inherent propensity to wickedness, he would not be deterred from crime on account of its magnitude ; therefore he proposed that a parricide, were it possible, should suffer many deaths, could he die oftener than once ; for he was the most indebted to those who had led him forth to the light.* Solon perhaps conceived, that the proper scope of laws is to corroborate and strengthen the duties of mankind while stemming the fountains of vice ; yet no one has ever judged it expedient to enforce the tenderness of mothers to their offspring, provided they were free of penalties on account of its existence ; nor of any other mutual obligation, the circumstances of which nature herself has arranged in fixing the relation. Improving on the severity of English legislation, we have heard indeed of a monstrous libel against nature in Scotland, which only some savage disposition never known to melt could have devised, enacting the forfeiture of the life of the mother whose infant was found dead, if she had not called for help in the birth. Let us turn from the frightful consequences, nor wound humanity by their illustration.†

Solon was right, perhaps, in denying the expe-

* *Plato de Legibus*, lib. ix.

† Only a few years have elapsed since the repeal of this atrocious statute.

diency of publicly forbidding parricide ; for, if its occurrence does stain the page of history, no prohibitions would have restrained the perpetrators. Too often have we seen the heir longing to enjoy his inheritance : already has his progenitor tarried an immoderate time : his possessions are of little use to him whose faculties are impaired : the aged are themselves of little use to society compared with the young : they may descend to the tomb without leaving a sensible blank behind. Such is the reasoning of those who meditate no evil, who are actuated by nothing but impatience to possess what they may be assured a few revolving years are hastening to convey to them. These sentiments are to be repressed ; they announce the decay of filial veneration, and avarice and ambition may at last obliterate this pious duty. It is remarkable to be told, that, except from the sudden gusts of passion, when reason is no longer our own, these are almost exclusively the deliberative sources of so horrible a crime. It is true that it may sometimes be traced to innate and incurable depravity ; but avarice and ambition commonly raise the hand of the parricide, at least among polished nations.

Though Tullia is said to have impiously drove her chariot over the body of her father, the atrocious offence of destroying a parent was unknown among the Romans for nearly 600 years after the foundation of the city.* But not only did a son dare to accuse

* *Livy*, lib. i. cap. 48. *Plutarch* in *vita Romuli*.

his father, who rattled his chains in his face and defended himself, invoking the avenging deities, and protesting his own innocence, but obtained his condemnation by the Roman senate.* Also in the later ages of growing iniquity, Vitellius was suspected of promoting his mother's death.† Nero indisputably was the perpetrator of a detestable matricide, if not by his own hands, by the violence of others, after the failure of various stratagems. Without extending our enquiries further among the ancients, we find that several wretches of modern nations, at least in France, England, and Scotland, have expiated the guilty deed with their lives, of whom the most celebrated perhaps was the Marchioness of Brinvilliers, in the year 1676, a woman endowed with high personal attractions, an engaging demeanour, and that serenity of countenance which seemed incapable of harbouring evil.‡ A late traveller saw an iron cage in one of the Ionian islands, containing the remains of a monster

* Vibius Serenus: *Tacitus*, *Annales*, lib. iv. cap. 29.

† Suspectus et in morte matris fuit: *Suetonius* in *vita Vitellii*, § 14. *Tacitus*, *Historiæ*, lib. iii. cap. 67.

‡ *Sevigny*, *Lettres* 104, 105, tom. iii. p. 451. 456. *Causes Celebres*, tom. i. tom. xviii. in which last case the diabolical deed was perpetrated by a son with his mother's aid. The Marchioness having been married in 1651, she cannot have suffered in early life.—Charles Drew in England, in 1740. *Remarkable Trials 1740—1764*. vol. i. *Life of Charles Drew*, London, 1740, in 8vo.—Mary Blandy, a more doubtful case.—Philip Standfield in Scotland in 1688.

under whose bloody hands had fallen his father, his mother, his brothers, and sisters. He fled, but justice overtook him, and the islanders, struck with horror, seldom ventured to approach the spot.*

But before quitting this head, it is singular to remark, that the destruction of parents is said to have been regularly practised by some of the uncivilized tribes of antiquity, as it is still recognised in the modern world. Pomponius Mela and Strabo explicitly state the fact, which we should have thought incredible without modern coincidence.† The former alludes to it in speaking of India and the Eastern Ocean: and in India at present, parents having attained an advanced period of life, are exposed to perish of want, or are carried within high water mark on the shore to be washed away by the tide.‡ Nor is it in any manner considered a criminal act; for we are assured in history that the parents ought to be rather considered the agents, if they desire their children to drown them, or cast

* *Laurent*, Recollections of a Classical Tour in Greece, Turkey, and Italy, p. 226.

† *Pomponius Mela*, lib. iii. c. 7. *Strabo*, lib. xi. tom. 2. p. 787, 791, speaking of the Caspii, says, that relations who have attained the age of 70 are starved. The Derbicæ kill all above the age of 70; the men with clubs, the women by strangulation. *Ælian Variæ Historiæ*, lib. iv. cap. 1. These people lived near the Hyrcanians. Possibly the identity of several tribes subsists, though they are known by different names.

‡ *Moore*, Hindu Pantheon, p. 42. 353. *Moore* on Infanticide, p. 198. *Forbes*, Oriental Memoirs, vol. i. p. 221.

them amidst the flames.* Shocking to relate, if the Greenland women “become burdensome, they are often either buried alive, or compelled to throw themselves into the sea.”† Nay, it is established that with some of the Canadian nations the eldest son should give his aged father the mortal blow. Death among the North American Indians, in many situations, is rather courted than dreaded, especially when their strength and activity fail from the load of years. “The father then solicits to change his climate, and the son cheerfully acts the part of an executioner, in putting a period to his parent’s existence.” If the father of a family “among the Chippeways seems reluctant to comply with the usual custom, and his life becomes burdensome to himself and his friends, and his children are obliged to maintain him with the labour of their hands, they propose to him the alternative, either to be put on shore in some small island, with a small canoe and paddles, bows and arrows, and a bowl to drink out of, and there run the risk of starving, or to suffer death manfully according to the laws of the nation.” There are few instances where the latter is not preferred; and after the same preliminary ceremonies and rejoicing which accompany the adoption of any individual as a warrior, the follow-

† *Renaudot*, Ancient Accounts of India and China, by two Mahomedan travellers in the ninth century, p. 82.

§ *Crantz*, History of Greenland, b. iii. ch. 2. § 5. The later observations of Sir Charles L. Giesecke are silent on this head.

ing song is recited. "The master of life gives courage. It is true all Indians know that he loves us, and we now give our father to him, that he may find himself young in another country, and be able to hunt." The festivities are renewed; and the eldest son gives the father the death-stroke with a tomahawk.* However fashions may palliate such a violation of duty with a nation, it is not difficult to see that its real source is impatience to be freed of a burden, as the heir is impatient to enjoy his inheritance. When selfishness interposes, mankind try to reconcile themselves, advancing step by step from lesser infringements to atrocious deeds. He who exposes his aged parents, those from whom he received his being, to be washed away with the rising flood, or to perish of famine in the desert, commits the same offence as he who strikes him a mortal blow to shorten his existence. His criminality however is less appalling, from the absence of violence.† There are some countries where filial veneration is not alike imperious on the barbarians who inhabit them. But its neglect will be found originating in the frequency of hardships blunting the feelings, or in sanctioned oppressions of the weaker. Surely where most predominant, it is the most convincing test of virtue.

* *Long, Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter*, p. 73. The author has observed quoted in illustration of this practice, *Creuxius, Historiæ Canadiensis*; but if actually there, he has overlooked it.

† *Campbell, Travels in Africa* p. 428, 515.

§ 5. *Fraternal Affection*.—Hitherto we have spoke of the direct evolution of the passions as awakened by nature, from the attraction of the sexes to their union, the love of the offspring, and of filial veneration ; and we have seen how these affections are also obliterated, and ties which should be indissoluble are sundered by new sensations, perverting the best feelings of mankind. It would appear that of all the benevolent affections, fraternal love, as one the most immediate and reciprocal, ought to be the most genuine and powerful. In the words of a dying parent to his sons, “ Quis autem amicioꝝ quam frater fratri ? aut quem alienum fidem invenies si tuis hostis fueris ? ” *—Who can be a better friend than a brother ? where can fidelity be found by those hostile to each other ? Generally, an intimate association and a correspondence of circumstances, are preparations for fraternal regard from the earliest dawn, which are followed by opportunities for its permanent subsistence. We see that it is warmest in youth, that it is then strengthened by familiarity ; and when separations ensue, it is conjoined with esteem. Perhaps fraternal affection is not only stronger between brothers and sisters, but also more lasting and uninterrupted than between the same relations of the same sex. The passions previously treated of apparently originate from nature exclusively, as being of a conservative

* *Sallust*, *Bellum Jugurthinum*, cap. 10.

of brothers, was repeated in the year 1479, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain. The commander of a party of insurgents ordered the prisoners who had fallen into his hands to draw lots, that six of them might forfeit their lives in retaliation for the punishment that had been inflicted on his adherents. One of the lots it is said fell on a gentleman forty-five years of age, who was married, and had left a family at home, while his younger brother, also a prisoner, but unmarried, escaped. With noble generosity, however, the latter insisted on being substituted as the victim, arguing that he would be the only sacrifice, for the preservation of their protector was essential to the wife and children of his brother. But this, on the other hand, was as strenuously rejected by him who had been pointed out by destiny: he refused to consent that one who had yet scarcely tasted the enjoyments of life, should be cut off from them; and so the debate continued until the captors agreed to the proffered exchange of life.* An affecting case is related by Hugo Van Linschoten, a Dutch navigator, on occasion of a deplorable shipwreck, where only a few of 500 persons endeavoured to escape in the yawl. A captain of their own number being elected, his first command was to throw some of his companions overboard, its size

* *Pulgar*, Cronica de Ferdinando y Isabel, cap. 82. *Ponz*, Viage de Espana, tom. iii. cart 8. says, the names of the brothers were Martin and John Saiz Talaya.

being insufficient for so many. Among these was the carpenter, who had assisted in fitting out the yawl: requesting a little wine and some marmalade, he quietly allowed himself to be cast into the sea. The lot having fallen next on one of two brothers, the younger, as before, solicited its transference to him, alleging that the other had better talents, and was more qualified than himself to maintain their sisters, and take care of their family. His request was granted: But after being thrown overboard, he swam for six hours after the yawl, and laying hold of its side, his hands were struck off with a naked sword. Yet the survivors, at last admiring his invincible courage, received him again, and they succeeded in reaching the coast of Africa, exhausted by the incredible hardships they had to endure for twenty days. * Among other instances of fraternal affection, it is confidently reported, that a French nobleman, well known in this country, offered to take his brother's place, whose blood was sought by the ferocious revolutionists.

Many testimonies of friendship are specified as deserving approbation, though truly no more than might be seen among strangers. But it never can be known how far mankind are willing or capable of going, until reduced to such trying situations.

If Plutarch has affirmed that the destruction of

* *Linschoten, Voyages, ch. 92.*

brothers followed like a postulatam in geometry for the safety of one, shall we deny that this violation of nature and humanity has resulted as a necessity from our depravity itself? Men are compelled to take measures for their own security, though at such an expense as the lives of those who would rob them of it. Thus what originates in necessity, at length becomes a precautionary fashion. Bajazet was the first emperor of the Turks who strangled his younger brother, on his accession to the throne in 1390: Murad III. reigned twenty years; "he had as many sons as he had reigned years, who being all strangled by the command of the eldest, followed their father to immortality."* Nothing is more familiar in history than Eastern potentates commanding the eyes of their brothers to be put out as a milder remedy, but one essential to preserve themselves from their expected treasons; and it is only in the latest years that the rigour of these barbarities has abated. The passions being more violent and uncontrolled, humanity has the lesser weight in proportion, and in the East certainly its claims are often refused; for the inoffensive falls as well as the offender. But the destruction of relatives is not confined to any clime; for wherever there are treachery and suspicion, there also will be vengeance.†

* *Cantemir*, History of the Ottoman Empire, ad an. 1595, p. 235, 236. *Eton*, Survey of the Turkish Empire, p. 141.

† *Saxo Grammaticus Historia Danica*, p. 25, 108, 224,

Pride, jealousy, avarice, and ambition, all have their effect, as well as the apprehension of danger. The oldest authors relate that Anacharsis the Scythian was slain by an arrow from the bow of his brother, for attempting to introduce the Grecian laws into his own barbarous country after he returned to it.* Conspiracies, however, are almost universally the real source of those atrocities reciprocally perpetrated by brothers, and in the most artful manner, as if the object of them were the greatest and most sanguinary foe. A brother of the Turkish Emperor having been involved in a conspiracy against him, and defeated in a battle, took refuge with one of the Popes of Rome. The Emperor, alarmed for his influence, courted the Pope with presents, and relics the most acceptable to Christians; at the same time remitting an ample annuity for the maintenance of his brother. After mutual communications, the Emperor signified to the Pope, that his brother "being mortal, and a prisoner, it would be better that he were removed from the miseries of this world, so that his soul might be transported to a happier place, where he would enjoy greater quiet." If this ensued, and his body were sent any where beyond seas, 300,000 ducats should be remitted to his Holiness. The earthly remains of the unfortunate fugitive soon arrived at Constantinople; and shews that the Northern regions were not exempt from this iniquity.

* *Diogenes Laertius* in vita Anacharsis, § 102.

God's vicegerent was immediately enriched by the commander of the faithful with the largess stipulated. The main perpetrator of the iniquity was also the perpetrator of a fratricide on his elder brother, and had his body thrown into the Tiber.* Some examples of this odious crime have been recorded in our own history: such as Edward IV. sanctioning the death of the Duke of Clarence; and a few others, among which may be named one of the darkest hue in 1741.†

The modern fratricides do not exceed the atrocity of the ancient; for a ruler of the Israelites "went into his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone."

Sisters are always most affectionately fostered by brothers, and they are usually preserved when political expediency exacts the destruction of the others. Violence offered by a brother to a sister is of the rarest occurrence. Yet let us recal the story told by Livy of the challenge between the Roman and Alban armies, which issued in a combat between three brothers on each side. A single Roman sur-

* *Gordon, Lives of Pope Alexander VI. and his son Caesar Borgia*, p. 89. 157.

† *Trial of Captain Samuel Goodere of the navy, for murder of his brother Sir John Dinely Goodere. Trial of Joseph Thomas Sollier, in 1808: Mejan, Causes Celebres, tom. x. p. 411. New Series.*

vived, whose sister had been betrothed to one of the slain. She tore her hair, and called on the name of her lover, when beholding the victor return with his spoils. Fierce and indignant, the latter sheathed his weapon in her breast, exclaiming, “ Begone to thy betrothed with thy unseasonable love, since thou knowest to forget what is due to thy deceased brothers, to him that is preserved, and to thy native country! So let every daughter of Rome perish who shall mourn for its enemy.”* These are matters of very ancient date, and probably of uncertain foundation. We are not to conclude, however, that no such unnatural deed has been done. A Prince or Governor of Natolia, lately drowned his sister for an intrigue with a Greek:† And it is related as a remarkable fact, that a pirate who had returned to Britain, and lived undiscovered there, was betrayed by his own sister “ out of mere malice, provoked thereto by a quarrel.”‡

But mankind are struck with unusual horror at the perpetration of fratricide: enhanced it may be by its being the original sin of our race, which drew down the divine anathema on the criminal. When the conscience of the guilty is awakened to the enormity of their crime, they hope for refuge in

* *Livy*, lib. i. cap. 23. 25.

† *M'Gill*, Travels in Turkey, Italy, and Russia—relative to Carasman Oglou.

‡ *Johnson*, History of the Pirates, p. 166. 168. He suffered the punishment due to his offence in 1721.

death; but he was not allowed to die, "Whoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold." Historians relate, that after Constans the emperor had been accessory to the destruction of his brother Constantius, stung with remorse, he never again enjoyed mental tranquillity. He believed that the deceased incessantly haunted him: and he became so much harassed and terrified by the vision, conjured up in his imagination, that he retired to Sicily, where he died.* Wealth, rank, and dignity, are no preservatives from the pangs of a guilty conscience: Some other evils may be dismissed, but the presence of this is incessant and everlasting. How happy are the innocent, who have nothing with which to reproach themselves, who enjoy that placid serenity which no reflections disturb! Their days are tranquil: their nights are sweet repose.—But, descending to modern times, it is said that, during the convulsions of the neighbouring country, the life of a person at Nantes, of republican principles, was saved by his brother, an adherent to the royal cause, when made prisoner by the insurgents of La Vendée. The loyalists afterwards proving unfortunate, this man, forgetful of fraternal love and gratitude, denounced his brother, who had fled to Nantes in quest of an asylum. His purpose was fulfilled:

* *Cedrenus Compendium Historiarum*, tom. i. p. 435. *Historiæ Miscellæ*, lib. xix.

but shortly subsequent to the destruction of him whom he was bound by love and duty to preserve, like Constans, he believed himself everywhere haunted by the shade of his departed brother. To aggravate the stings of conscience so justly aroused by avenging nature, his wife, young and beautiful, began to entertain the utmost horror and aversion for him, and incessantly reproached him for his detestable fratricide.*

Thus we have endeavoured to trace the regular evolution and subsidence of some of the passions originating in a benevolent principle. Though plainly for the purpose of conservation, they may be neutralized by other mental affections, and admit the substitution of malevolence in their decay. The union of the sexes consequent to love, parental tenderness awakened along with the existence of the offspring, filial veneration inspired by gratitude and regard, and fraternal affection binding the children of the same family together, are the work of nature only, and constitute the natural state of mankind. If the tie be weakened it is by art, or an alteration of their first condition; it is the work of demons to arm relatives against each other.

CLASS II. § 1. *Friendship*.—Independently of the kind affections originating in what we have assumed to be natural principles, because the imme-

* *Larochejaquelein* Memoires, tom. ii. p. 172.

mediate relation of the parties is evident, others of a lower order are ready to warm the human breast, which apparently have not an ulterior purpose to fulfil, nor arise from the ties of kindred.

Mankind require continual indulgence and support: they are more or less dependent on each other: their strength would quickly fail had they none to lean to but themselves; for singly they would prove ill adapted to resist the evils, or to provide for all the necessities of life. They are open to the inroads of sickness, susceptible of personal injury, liable to untoward fortune, exposed to the errors of judgment. Friendship must knit them together: charity must sustain them and minister to their distresses. Were they not relieved in adversity, their errors palliated and their misfortunes consoled, the world would be a scene of uninterrupted and intolerable misery: For it is not solely the tenderness of the corporeal frame from which we suffer, but from intellectual imperfections, against which we have no exemption, and from all the external calamities destructive of our comfort. We unconsciously render ourselves the subjects of reprehension, because none is perfect and many are wicked. “No mortal, though his intention be accomplished, can gain universal approbation, so as to be free from challenge and censure. Who was more just than Solon and Aristides? Yet there is an oration which reviles both.—Indeed, being but men, although they attained eminent perfection in their respec-

tive qualifications, still through human frailty they failed, and committed many mistakes." *

But the kind affections originating from the ties of blood, or tending to the desire of seeking the society, and uniting ourselves with those beloved, are not enough for the common succour and preservation of the human race. It is essential that we should be susceptible of feeling for strangers as well as for kindred. Benevolence, therefore, or well-wishing to mankind, the moulding of the heart to the interests of others, is a provision from which vast and immediate profits are to be derived by animated beings. Not an individual has lived who has not enjoyed its benefit once and again; nor is there a single individual who can dispense with its subsistence, unless he shall establish himself alone, secure from casualties, and independent of all things on earth. Natural benevolence, or the love of relatives, needs no recommendation, as it originates with the relationship itself; but well-wishing to our race, being more the virtue of a social state or of a civilized condition, some philosophers have founded their entire system of morality on its due observance. From this we are bound to consider mankind as if they were placed in that situation occupied by ourselves, and to do for them what we should find grateful to be done for us. Such offices as are useful to others, and neither of expense nor labour to

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xxvi. § i. tom. 2. p. 512.

the agent, are justly expected from all towards all who require them. “ They are but low evidences of virtue ; but refusing them is very hateful, and shews a temper void of humanity.” *

There is no virtue better calculated than benevolence to gain self-approval, which indeed is its true reward ; for it shuns the public applause, and screens itself from observation. Let us behold how solicitous the benevolent are for the welfare of their fellow-creatures ; how anxiously they search out the unfortunate, to provide for their necessities, to mitigate their affliction, and listen complacently to the tale of sorrow ! The eye of commiseration beams with pleasure in distributing comfort : it is ingenious in discovering misery, and in ministering relief. Benevolence alone can know to treat designs with candour, to praise the qualities of men and meet their frailties with indulgence, to varnish their imperfections, to prop their falling hopes, and raise them from the depressions of disappointment. While some exact glory, and publish their favours, those of the truly benevolent are conferred in secret, and void of ostentation. Are not these the most exalted properties ?—the highest embellishments of mankind ?

Philanthropy is not content with private and individual gratifications : it takes a circle more enlarged to banish slavery, to benefit a country, or to ameliorate

* *Hutcheson, Moral Philosophy, Book ii. chap. 2.*

the condition of the inhabitants of the globe. Have not we heard of a bold and illustrious band, courting the post of danger, willing to rescue their comrades, or fall in their defence? Have not we heard of those who in battle devoted themselves for the safety of their army, and became a living sacrifice for a national benefit? or of some who, at the expense of existence, fulfilled what they believed acceptable to the gods, or which would avert a public calamity?—Nay, there are notorious instances of another kind, where the love of mankind, accompanied by the ardent pursuit of science, has induced some adventurous persons to subject themselves voluntarily to loathsome or pestilential diseases, in order to find their remedy. *

That kind of benevolence immediately succeeding the ties of blood is friendship, an ingredient undoubtedly of all the warm affections, directed towards the welfare of others, by whatever denomination they may be recognised. During the entire course of existence, its pleasures and its profits are indispensable to mankind: it is the pillar of support, the key-stone binding the parts of society, which, shaken or displaced, would allow the structure to fall to ruin. Every bond of alliance and of union is preceded by friendship, and its strength confirmed by fidelity; it operates on all our concerns, and re-

* Several experiments of self-inoculation to ascertain the nature of the plague and cancer have had a fatal issue.

gulates all our intercourse. The benefits we confer are the effusions of friendship; most of the intrinsic advantages we obtain throughout life are mediately or immediately derived from the cares or intercession of our friends. The world, divested of friendship, would be unfit for the habitation of men. Zeno, the ancient Stoic, justly designs a friend another self; and Epicurus ranks friendship as one of the most endearing enjoyments of existence.* We should even deem it a necessity, for there must be some one or other the depository of our secrets, and in whose faith we can put our reliance. It is among the purest of virtues, for it is not the child of interest: it requires no parity of age or station; no equality of sex or fortune: it may subsist between the young and the old, between the poor and the wealthy, between the great and the humble, between the master and his slave. Could that author be serious, or did he speak in irony, when saying, "what is usually called friendship, is only a partnership; a reciprocal regard for one another's interests, and an exchange of good offices;—in a word, a mere traffic, wherein self-love always proposes to be a gainer?"†—It is impossible.

Nevertheless, friendship more readily originates under a certain similarity of circumstances, a sympathy of temper, or correspondence of taste. Man-

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. vii. § 23; lib. x. § 148.

† *Roche foucault*, Maxim, 168.

kind are attracted by a common resemblance of inclinations, and enjoy the same pursuits together, whether they be virtuous or vicious.* Perhaps it is the strongest and most durable when formed in youth, as then the breast is more alive to the softer emotions: it matures with our years, and is confirmed in an attachment that has no termination except in the close of existence.

But it is doubtful whether friendship so ardent prevails in the great theatre of the world, as in the narrower circle of chosen society. Not only, as has been already shewn, is the diffusion of love its proportional weakening, so that it becomes evanescent and lost among the multitude; but there is less leisure for exercise of the virtues. We are wont to complain that there is not so much friendship in our own times as of old, that there is less sincerity in those professing their regard, that they are only lukewarm in our favour. It is not unlikely that this reproach is just; but sometimes we indiscreetly rank one as a friend who rates himself only as our acquaintance. The vehemence of friendship also, like that of the other passions, is subject to decay, as we daily see those who were once in the most intimate association, pass each other with indifference, and that without any acknowledged cause

* *Wright* on the Passions, p. 96: "We see that lions, tigers, and leopards, whose inclinations are most cruel, whose passions are most fierce, yet one affecteth another, and liveth in quiet society."

of dissatisfaction. La Bruyere relates, that there were two counsellors of state in Paris, whose life had passed in intimate union, who occupied the same dwelling, and used their property in common ; yet at the age of fourscore found it expedient to separate. “ Though having but one day longer to live, they could not venture to spend it together,” and they became enemies.* In that city also there were other two persons whose friendship had subsisted twenty years : their meeting had been always productive of pleasure ; and feeling it irksome to remain asunder, they resolved to lodge in the same house. They could scarcely support this greater intimacy during six months longer, when it compelled them to part.† Many suppose themselves friendly, but we should be wary of whom we admit to our friendship ; we should study the properties, and scrutinize the defects of those we would select, to discover who shall prove worthy of our choice. The wisest of men is reported to have esteemed those alone suitable, who had shewn their fidelity to others.

Yet after having made our choice, how is genuine friendship to be known ? Is it only by demanding a token of regard, or by being visited in the season of adversity ? Do not we find that the prosperous are always followed : that when the tide of fortune

* *La Bruyere les Caracteres*, vol. i. p. 222.

† *Reflections on our Common Failings*, p. 103.

flows, many cling to us and court our favour merely from interested motives, and that as it ebbs they seem fearful of remaining behind? Do not we convince ourselves in bitter disappointment, that many on whom we are justly entitled to call for support, have not the smallest inclination to return our benefaction; nay, that in spite of all their proffers and promises, sometimes when their voice might be raised in our behalf, it is given to promote a worthless rival, or to advance an enemy?—Ah! the world is very wicked!

Sometimes also those whom we think bound to befriend us, either from their own innate generosity, or because we have aided their purposes, pledge themselves to gratify our wishes. We claim performance, they begin to ponder whether they cannot do better, and to examine inquisitively whether they can expect any adequate return if they shall prove faithful. But no man who has assumed the character of a friend can quit it honourably without testifying his friendship. “Promises are obligations, and men use to reckon their obligations in the inventory of their estate: so that the promises of an able friend” are to be esteemed as part of our substance. *

Nevertheless, until the truth be established by the mutual interchange of good offices, until some manifest demonstration of regard be proffered, smiles

* *Reynolds*, Of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul, p. 251.

and complacency, ready at command, too often shew that those on whom we have relied are friends in every thing but that alone wherein we require their friendship.

Without acceding to every call upon it, however, friendship may be sufficiently ardent: It is not incumbent on us to listen to the speculations of that mind which, weaker than our own, would involve us in inconsistencies. Sometimes the importunate expectations of friends are so unreasonable, that it is impossible for the most liberal and munificent to satisfy them, while refusal makes us enemies. "Julius Cæsar was assassinated by fewer enemies than friends, those whose insatiable hopes he had not gratified. Yet he was willing to please them, for none was more liberal: he reserved nothing to himself but the privilege of giving away."* In the present state of society, in obtaining support, men are not entitled to exact a sacrifice: we are not to be imprudent in our willingness to befriend.

The purity of friendship is disinterestedness; where anxious to give we seek no return, or are reluctant to receive. It is delightful to repose on the bosom of our friends, to know that we may confide in their fidelity, that they will enjoy our pleasures and grieve for our cares, that their breast is warmed

* Sed quemadmodum sufficere tam improbis desideriis posset, cum tantum omnes concupiscerent quantum poterat unus? Vidit itaque strictis circa sellam suam gladiis commilitones suos. *Seneca de Ira, lib. iii. cap. 30.*

in our behalf. It is delightful to blend our wishes with theirs, to feel that we have sure counsel in a trying case, that we have a firm prop to sustain our fortunes; to have a common sincerity to accompany us in our career.

Plato, and his disciple Aristotle, held friendship to be of three kinds,—natural, social, and the regard of hospitality; and the Stoics denied that it could subsist among the wicked:*. Or it was discriminated as founded on utility, pleasure, and virtue, which last alone is considered by Aristotle as productive of permanent satisfaction.† Friendship being esteemed a virtue, the denial of it to the vicious followed as a corollary. But morality and the converse, or virtue and vice, not only are differently estimated in different countries, but by individuals of the same country: and as it is admitted that an action may be good or bad according to the circumstances of the agent, those who lead an immoral life are not necessarily and without exception precluded from entertaining the warm attachments of friendship. Mankind are indisputably virtuous when precepts and example correspond in avoiding what would be obviously wrong: and by their love of what is estimable, not in speculation but practice.

Sacred writ points out the utmost criterion of

* *Diogenes Laertius* in vita Platonis, § 81.—in vita Aristotelis, § 31.

† *Aristotle*, *Ethic.* lib. viii. cap. 3.

friendship; for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend;" but verification of the fact has remained for profane history. Thus two friends, Damon and Phyntias, were willing to die for each other in the same manner as we have instanced of affectionate relatives.* Lucian has recorded, that one Abauchas preferred saving his friend wounded and unable to escape during a fire, to saving his own wife and children, and when reproached with his negligence, he replied, that "it was uncertain what these might afterwards prove, but he could never find such a friend."† The ancients besides relate, that a certain individual personated Brutus to save him, assuming his name, and that he perished in his stead: and that the slave of Panopion, taking his master's clothes, voluntarily underwent the penalty designed for him.‡ So deeply attached have slaves and servants been to their guardians and protectors, that they have refused survivance: and even now, or very lately, female attendants in the East have rushed amidst the flames of the funeral pile consuming their mistresses. It is admirable to witness the respect and veneration, united to the love of those

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. vi. tom. 2. p. 554.

† *Lucian Toxaris*, § 61. Other examples of friendship are given by this author, but it is not easy to determine those where he speaks historically.

‡ *Valerius Maximus*, lib. iv. cap. 7. de Amicitiae Vinculo; lib. vi. cap. 8. de Fide Servorum erga Dominos, § 6.

who merit the highest estimation: and how far it may be carried when their safety, their honour, or their exigencies require. About the middle of the fourteenth century, Peter of Spain condemned a lady of distinguished rank, whose son had supported an insurrection, to be burnt in one of the squares of the city of Seville: An attendant, named Isabella Davalos, who had not deserted her in that hour which is the touchstone of fidelity, was present on the spot; and observing the person of her mistress indecorously exposed to the vulgar gaze, she rushed forward to compose her garments, in which dutiful office she was caught by the same flames and perished. The ashes of both were collected, and deposited in the convent of Saint Isidore; where a narrative or representation of the incident is sculptured on their monument.

Hospitality, which is specified by the ancients as one of the three kinds of friendship, seems rather of a different complexion from the selection of individuals with whom an intimate union is to be formed: and is more properly a branch of charitable or sympathetic benevolence. The kind mental affections that have been hitherto discussed, tend to incorporate their objects with us, and we are willing to substitute ourselves in their fortunes. The charitable or sympathetic affections scarcely go so far, at least we can give no example where they have been admitted to threaten the life of the benevolent in any shape. To shelter the unpro-

tected stranger, to succour him who is compelled to lean to our aid, is also one of the stronger moral obligations: for all mankind being dependent on each other, assistance is not to be denied when necessity pleads for it. Presents to strangers, say the ancients, have a kind of similitude to offerings to the gods: for strangers being destitute both of companions and kindred, are objects of the greater consideration, therefore the considerate should be careful to avoid inhospitality.*

Mercy and compassion seem to advance with civilization; but it appears otherwise with hospitality, and that it is rather impaired by the extension and improvement of society.† It neither belongs to the lowest nor the highest state of mankind, but to a middle stage, that which admits of slender distribution of slender possessions. We have daily occasion to remark, that the virtue of hospitality is most conspicuous in the least cultivated parts of the British empire, and we behold its visible decline among the more polished circles. The approach of the stranger is joyfully hailed among the wilds and the mountains; there is an amicable contention by the inhabitants for the preference of his presence, they willingly bestow upon him the best they have to give, they urge him to prolong his

* *Aristotle*, *Ethic.* lib. iv. cap. 3. *Plato* de *Legib.* lib. v.

† *Fuller*, *The Holy State*, B. iii. ch. 1. p. 143, specifies hospitality "for one's family, this is of necessity, for strangers this is courtesy, for the poor this is charity."

stay, and on his departure they warmly invite his return. Nor is it in words of courtesy only, but from the genuine generosity of their hearts. In proportion as we advance towards the cities, hospitality declines, and in the largest, where the most polished circles assemble, it is more a complimentary intercourse with the stranger, than an interest for his gratification. Perhaps we may blame the mere extension of society for weakening some of the most amiable virtues: Ostentation also would prepare a festival; but many cannot afford ostentation: they are deterred from offering what they falsely feel would be undervalued: thence, instead of a benignant welcome, hospitality partakes of formal ceremony.

It may seem extraordinary that hospitality should more frequently reside in the cottage than in the palace; that it should be the virtue of the lowly peasant, and seldom find a place in the breast of his proud master. A party of French navigators being succoured by English fishermen in the most desert of the Australasian regions; "Why," they ask, "should this property be exercised almost exclusively in that rude character and condition which seems the most remote from imposing such an obligation? Is misfortune better adapted than our brilliant education and philosophy, to develop that noble and disinterested virtue which makes us compassionate the distress of others."*

* *Peron*, Voyage aux Terres Australes, tom. ii. p. 22.
Golownin, Narrative of his Captivity in Japan in 1811, p. 125,

Being one of the qualities of the earlier stages of society, its value is felt by the mutual necessities demanding the exercise of hospitality. It is then that traffic, and consequently the balance of self interest, is rare; where they who look no farther than their daily supply, are ready to share it with the stranger. With this most moderate condition myriads are well content: but if they obtain superfluities, and find they can be spared, and if improving their possessions by further accumulations, they begin to feel their worth and hesitate about parting with them either to friends or strangers. At length a selfish intercourse expects a return for what is bestowed.

Hospitality, however, is not universal among the rudest nations: on the contrary, they deem the territory which they occupy as their own, whose boundaries none shall dare to pass with impunity, and they are the dread of strangers. Some are accused of having barbarously sacrificed strangers to their sanguinary deities, and others, such as Sparta, by the most rigorous laws precluded their access; thus violating those inherent rights which are founded on nature, established for the mutual support of society and consecrated by all religions.

observes, on a person clandestinely approaching his prison with provisions, "I was greatly astonished that a man who, from his dress, apparently belonged to the very lowest class, should be actuated by so powerful a feeling of benevolence, as to hazard his own safety for the sake of conveying such comfort to an unfortunate prisoner."

The Lucani are said to have imposed a fine on whoever refused access to a stranger after sunset: and Tacitus the historian, treating of the manners of the ancient Germans, says, "it was held unlawful to repulse any one."* Cæsar extends their hospitality still further; for he affirms that their houses stood open, and that food was provided for strangers, whose safety was inviolable.† Afterwards hospitality was equally considered a duty; and it was specially enjoined among the Franks by the laws of Charlemagne in the first years of the ninth century.‡ These are facts demonstrative of the earlier stages of society, where some of the least able are the readiest to supply the wants of others. It is well known that the Arabs are the most celebrated of the moderns for their strict observance of the duties of hospitality. The stranger who demands it as his right, and throws himself on their protection, is entitled, by their established customs, to receive it: and while he remains his person, as among the ancient Gauls or Germans, is inviolable. Perhaps his host accompanies him to the confines of his territory; but the moment he quits them the obliga-

* *Tacitus de Moribus Germanorum*, § 21. *Ælian, Variæ Historiæ*, lib. iv. cap. 1.

† *Cæsar de Bello Gallico*, lib. vi. cap. 23. *Hospites violare fas non putant: qui, quaque de causa ad eos venerunt ab injuria prohibent, sanctosque habent: iis omnium domus patent; victusque communicatur.*

‡ *Capitularia Regum Francorum*, tom. i. col. 370. 400. *Precipio ut in omni regno nostro, neque dives neque pauper peregrinis hospitium denegare audeant.*

tion is dissolved: the same tribe with which he took refuge may plunder him with impunity; and some have been known to become victims to the insatiable thirst for pillage rooted in this wandering and predatory people.* In Florida, "a savage will share his last ounce of meat with a visitant stranger."† The guest of the Circassian may confide implicitly in the strict observance of the laws of hospitality, or a promise of protection. Should he be threatened by his enemies, the wife of his host gives him a little of her own milk to drink, after which he is regarded as his legitimate son, and his new relatives are bound to defend him as such, and to revenge his blood.‡ It is said that a tribe eminently distinguished by hospitality occupies the banks of the Danube towards the eastern parts of Europe: each traveller, of whatever religion or country, visiting their possessions, is entertained during three days by the villagers in the most liberal manner that their abilities can afford. He is invited by every person standing at his door "to partake of the fare which God has sent him."§ The rude hospitality of the middle ages was carried to an extraordinary length

* *Seetzen* has presented a more interesting view than any modern traveller of the manners of the Arabs, as may be seen in his brief remains.

† *Romans*, Natural History of East and West Florida, p. 44.

‡ *Klaproth*, Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia, p. 318.

§ *Cantemir*, History of the Othman Empire, p. 211. This tribe, called Chitiki, having originally migrated from Asia, lately occupied a tract in the Principality of Wallachia.

in Europe: and among certain tribes, in other quarters of the globe at present, it extends in the zeal of the host to participate with the stranger those rights, the infringement of which is wont to kindle the most violent jealousy, and an ardent thirst for revenge.

Hospitality is a virtue which seems to be taught by a feeling for its necessity: and the precise fashion in which it is exercised is less important than acknowledging our obedience to it. Although we think it more common among those who rather should be its objects, still, to the honour of the human race, some who are the most capable are the most willing.

§ 2. *Charity.*—But there is a class of mankind endowed with minds so feelingly and liberally moulded, as to be alive to the calamities of all, and make it a chief employment to minister towards their alleviation. They study the condition of those around them, enquiring who are the good or the bad, who are the successful or the unfortunate, who may be sustained by timely interference, who has sunk that may be raised again. They find, for it is too common to escape observation, that the most favourable lot has not been dispensed to the worthiest: that many have been compelled to struggle with adversity, that the wounds are deep and the pains of lasting maladies are acute, that the virtuous are depressed, and that the meritorious languish in

neglect, who, but for their unjust humiliation, would prove an ornament to society. They discover that it is the deserving chiefly who are unwilling to obtrude themselves on notice, whose merit is covered by the veil of modesty, who sometimes charge their condition on themselves, or undervalue their own recommendations. The deserts of the worthy give them the firmest claim on the support of the benevolent, and the good will be their first rewarders: for the absence of virtue in ourselves prevents our discovery of it in others. Penetrating into their circumstances, we see how they are repulsed by worldly accident: and we gladden in the privilege of rescuing them from it; we encourage their willingness in well-doing by gentleness, and shield them from the censure that would overwhelm them with mortification. If it be so plain that in a social state those who labour most enjoy the fewest things, and if those having the greatest number of enjoyments have no labours to undergo,* it belongs especially to them to mitigate the asperities of their fellows, and to remedy the injustice of fortune. There are many whose delicate feelings cannot endure the slightest acrimony, whom malevolence in rebuke at once plunges in despair. It is they who should receive applause for their proper merits, and protection from insult: and it will be found that without more active interference, lenity is no useless portion

* *Burke, Vindication of Natural Society: Works, vol. i. p. 53.*

of benevolence. "Do not you see, gentlemen," said the late Stanislaus to his courtiers, severely criticising a young painter, "that this poor man wishes to obtain credit for his talents, that he may subsist his family. Should your censure discourage him, he is ruined. Men should be always assisted: nothing is gained by injuring them." He praised the performance which had been presented to him, and liberally rewarded the artist. Perhaps the pleasure of benevolence is as sensible to its author as to its object. Were not the property of discrimination as unequally distributed as the gifts of fortune, only the best would be the chosen.

While in the full enjoyment of health and strength, and enabled to participate of all the comforts which opulence affords, let us glance around at our fellow mankind. Nothing remains for us to desire: Yet what a picture do they exhibit! How infinite is their lowliness, how varied are their restrictions, of how many diversities are their sufferings! Do we invite their approach? do we call on the children of affliction to come to us with the tale of sorrow? No!—"The fortunate and the proud wonder at the insolence of human wretchedness: that it should dare to present itself before them, and with the loathsome aspect of its misery to disturb the serenity of their happiness." * It is not so

* *Smith, Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part I. sect. iii. chap. 2.*

with the benevolent: they follow that divine precept, dictated by a deep sense of the perishable condition of man, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked. They reflect that the greater the proportion of the goods of the world belonging to one, the more numerous must be the individuals who are deprived of them: that as all mortals are verging to decay, if they be in the possession of their own corporal and mental faculties, its progress involving others is only on the way to reach themselves. Meantime they stretch forth the hand of charity to shelter and relieve the needy.

But what especially softens the hearts of mankind, is themselves having suffered. It would be vain to depict torment to him whose head has never ached: privations cannot be figured amidst stores of plenty: Mirth never damps itself in mourning. The case is changed along with the visitations of sorrow. "*Sunt molles in calamitate mortalium animi.*" We are the most firmly united under the pressure of a common affliction, and the remembrance of it is the most frequent in our retrospects: what is painful rises unbidden. But by a remarkable constitution of the mind, this calamity must not be great severity, accompanied by long duration, otherwise here, as before, a singular inversion of sentiment ensues; and however deeply those exposed to it may have felt for their own and the misfortune of their comrades, impatient irascibility at length displaces commiseration.

Perhaps the reader will consider himself engaged in dull moralities—that precepts and injunctions are perpetually urged upon him, either unnecessarily, or with which he has no leisure nor opportunity to comply. But images involuntarily spring up; nor can we divest ourselves at will of the train of thought that follows them. They may be dull, indeed; our contemplations cannot be mirthful when they dwell on affliction; though we should receive every thing as the best, it will not appear under the most pleasing aspect. Subjects so grave, which embrace our real condition, are not to be lightened by airy fictions or sportive narratives. It is truth which should captivate and engross our minds, it stands for ever; it is a constant example, but the floating ideas of fancy are soon washed away. Thus let the reader change the name of dull moralities to speculations on truth.

The sight of distress awakens that corresponding sympathy which is naturally implanted in the breast, accompanied by the desire to relieve it, and followed by the purest satisfaction at having fulfilled our wishes. We feel that we have discharged a duty, such a duty as we should have expected to ourselves under similar calamities. We are conscious of having done right. Thus do the poor and necessitous ever find a ready friend in the benevolent; their poverty may be borne with the fewer regrets, and the hapless and helpless condition of the miserable is rendered less forlorn.

Some of the benevolent yielding to their sympathies, are said to have given away all they had to the poor; an unwise though well intended generosity, which probably diminished its real value: For it is less by profusion than by regular and moderate dispensation, that the greatest wealth is most profitably employed.

The sympathies of the benevolent are not only aroused by the appearance of the unfortunate before them: they whisper the condition of those unseen, and prompt them to relieve it. One stretches forth his hand to feed the hungry, another seeks for the naked to be clothed; and some, contemplating even the wants of posterity, provide for their succour. They are never weary of benevolence. “No day elapses without acts of kindness, courtesy, and virtue.” *

It would be vain to attempt enumerating the examples of this exalted virtue: to specify the kinds and quality of the donations or endowments for benevolent purposes, and the liberality which has been displayed. Each individual who peruses these pages is familiar with some known to himself in particular, though never meeting the public eye: for this is truly a virtue which delights most in secrecy.—The celebrated Montesquieu having remarked something peculiar in the ferryman of a wherry plying

* Said of the Emperor Alexander Severus.—*Ælius Lampridius* in vita Alex. Severi, § 20.

in Marseilles harbour, investigated his situation. He discovered that he was a jeweller by profession, but that he was occupied at the oar on Sundays and festivals, to aid the industry of his mother and two sisters; and that all were labouring strenuously to accumulate 2000 crowns for the ransom of his father, who was a prisoner in Barbary. Montesquieu listened attentively to the narrative. In six weeks the captive appeared among his family, ignorant to whom he owed his liberty, but believing it to be to their pious industry. Their poverty proved the reverse. Montesquieu was the real benefactor, yet he would not confess it; when the son meeting him long after in the street, and embracing his knees, besought him to come and witness the joy he had spread among the relatives of the prisoner. He mingled with the crowd, nor was the truth discovered until his decease. In Britain we can scarcely appreciate the benevolence of redeeming captives, as our country is preserved from the scourge of ferocious invaders, and never is the theatre of war. But in different parts of civilized Europe, where the dearest relatives may be hurried into slavery, various institutions have been founded for the redemption of Christian captives from piratical states; and sometimes their members, with much personal hazard, visit barbarians to discharge the duties of their generous benevolence.* The ancients relate,

* *Helyot*, Histoire des Ordres Religieux, tom. ii. p. 310: A religious order for the redemption of captives was esta-

that the father of one of the Grecian sages redeemed Messenian captive girls, whom he educated as his own daughters, and returned to their parents enriched with presents. Cyprian, one of the early fathers of the church, collected a large sum of money for the redemption of Christian captives, who had been carried off in the irruption of a neighbouring horde in the third century. During the invasion of Italy by the Vandals in the fifth, when many of the inhabitants were dragged away by the conquerors, Paulinus, bishop of Nola, a man of uncommon piety, spent all he possessed in the redemption of captives. Incapable of withstanding the maternal tears of a widow for her son, "he gave himself in slavery to one of these barbarians for his ransom." But such remarkable benevolence received its due reward; for the older historians write, that "when God made known his sanctity to the same barbarous people who had retreated to Africa, he was enabled to return with all his countrymen to his native land." An anecdote somewhat similar, but which surely requires strong corroboration, is told of a French ecclesiastic, who, in his capacity of Almoner General to the galleys at Marseilles, availed himself of many opportunities to indulge in benevolence. At length beholding some wretched

blished in France in the year 1198; and in the year 1200, two of its members, natives of Britain, were sent to Morocco to redeem captives.—*Voyages to Barbary*, 1736.—*History of the Piratical States of Barbary*, 1752.

captive, inconsolable at being sundered from his wife and children, whom he had left in extreme necessity, he resolved to serve in his place, and was chained to the oar accordingly. He lived towards the beginning of the seventeenth century; and he suffered from the weight of his fetters long after being himself released.

Some authors, in zealous partiality for their religion, are inclined to deny the philanthropy of the ancient pagans. They affirm that they were unacquainted with public institutions for the relief of suffering mankind. But let us remember how few of the works of the good are recorded compared with those of the bad. History is a memorial of cruelty, slaughter, treachery, and ambition, in one of its greatest branches; and in another not less important, of imbecillity, imposture, and superstition. We are obliged to recur to solitary examples, such as Nerva the Roman emperor having directed that the children of poor parents throughout Italy should be maintained at the public expense;* and that Marcus Antoninus the philosopher granted many offices under his government to those senators who, free of any fault of their own, were not affluent.† But wherever there is affection and refinement, there will be also charity; wherever the softer virtues are cultivated, there philanthropy will

* *Sextus Aurelius Victor*, Epitome, cap. 12.

† *Julius Capitolinus* in vita M. Antonini, cap. 10.

find a share. It is not because a rigid policy might refuse to rear defective children, or because superstition might banish the insane as persons possessed by evil spirits, that all humanity was abrogated. Though there be many indifferent, harsh, and intolerant, there are some indulgent, feeling, and merciful. Friendship has always subsisted in the world, under the various aspects of family affection, courtesy to strangers, and sympathy for suffering. The virtue of benevolence indeed, even at this day, is very unequally distributed; and in the countries most distinguished either by its prevalence or omission, it is more peculiarly the amiable distinction of the female sex. Where men are rough and barbarous, fierce to resent, ready to wound and destroy, women in general divert their wrathful purpose, assuage their fury, and harbour the unprotected. If history be chiefly occupied with wars and conquests, with the pride of the victor, the humility of the vanquished, with ceremonies, processions, parade, and triumphs—where could the tranquil philanthropist find a station? How could his silent and secret benefactions be recorded? Inconsiderable actions of persons elevated by chance to an eminent place, from an artificial lustre, are much more carefully preserved and transmitted to posterity, than those truly more brilliant of individuals equally meritorious, but of lower rank. The public attention is anxiously directed to things often altogether unworthy of notice. Perhaps there were

other modes of relieving necessities, not less effectual, known to pagan countries, than those favoured by modern approbation. Too few compositions have escaped the devouring corrosions of time, to entitle us to deny the virtue of philanthropy to the ancients.

The Christian æras, however, have been nobly embellished by charity. The foundations for the suffering and the needy; the distributions from monastic institutions, since our earliest knowledge of them, have been infinite and magnificent. It was not solely from imbecillity, bigotry, or superstition, that treasures were devoted to sustain the religious establishments of old; for the opulence of many of the best of the benevolent corresponding with the spirit of their inmates, was piously consecrated to mitigate the hardships of their fellow creatures: The pilgrim, the stranger, the poor, and the distempered, all shared in philanthropic dispensations. Amidst the wickedness of mankind, they were a glorious testimony that the human heart can be virtuous.

The downfall of such institutions perhaps has given a better scope to charity, and our native soil may boast the benevolence of its children as far as the name of Britain is known. But even the most distinguished endowments for alleviating the personal distress of mortals are rivalled by those elsewhere of former æras; for besides other foundations, Louis XI. in the thirteenth century “ directed an

edifice to be constructed in Paris for reception of 350 of the blind." * Yet it is affirmed that the number and splendour of the charitable endowments of Italy now surpass those of any other portion of the world; that "there is no disease of body, no distress of mind, no visitation of Providence, to which the human form is liable, from its first appearance till its final deposition in the grave, which is not relieved and provided for, if not beyond relief, with tenderness and charity." † Nevertheless we shall be scarcely content to yield the palm to that favoured country, earlier in civilization indeed, but not more ardent in generous sensibility; for we are able to contrast this eulogium with the observations which constant opportunity verify to our knowledge, that "there is not a disease that can afflict human nature, nor a want which the varying condition of mankind can require; there is not a means of instruction, nor a course of life for which peculiar instruction is necessary; there is scarcely a calling in the exertions of which the vigour of strength and the labour of maturity have been exhausted; nor is there a casualty of evil accident, nor any one of the manifold visitations of adversity in poverty or distress; and to these may be added the interment of the dead; but finds an

* *Nangiacus*, *Gesta Ludovici Noni Francorum Regis*. *Gaufridus de Bello loco* in vita ejusd. apud *Duschene*, *Hist. Franc. Scriptores*, tom. v. p. 368—454.

† *Eustace*, *Classical Tour*, vol. iii. p. 480; vol. iv. p. 249.

open asylum, a resort ready prepared, with every accommodation for reception, comfort, instruction, and cure." * Nor is our charity restricted to institutions previously established, or to our own country: for it is always ready for unexpected calamities for strangers and for citizens, at home and abroad. The ancients relate as remarkable, that when Rome was taken and burnt by the Gauls, the inhabitants of Marseilles made a public and private contribution to assist the Romans and their allies in payment of the sum with which the victors had compelled them to purchase peace.† What immoderate treasures has not this nation contributed to other nations under similar circumstances! With how liberal a hand have not we taken from ourselves and laden our allies!

The duties practised by our ancestors have been transferred to us in another shape: But the splendid edifices of religious endowment dispensing charities still subsisting abroad, have a more imposing aspect; while many of minor note in Britain preserve their pristine humility. Yet to read of a nobleman devoting his possessions, even during his own survivance, for an asylum for 500 orphan females, denotes a grandeur of mind, a generosity to the world, an indifference to himself, which almost

* *Highmore, Pietas Londinensis; the History, Design, and present State of the various Public Charities in and near London*, Pref. p. xxv.

† *Justin*, lib. xiii. cap. 5.

defies imitation; nor can we say that it has been equalled in Britain. Some uncommon institutions also subsist on the continent, which have no example here. In Rome, Milan, and other cities, there is an association consisting chiefly of nobles, whose duty it is to attend on condemned criminals, from the time of receiving sentence until having suffered the capital punishment attached to their respective offences: * and at Naples, a city whose charitable endowments confer a high moral character on the inhabitants, this benevolence is said to extend still farther in providing the means of decent interment for their bodies, and of relieving their widows and children. †

But in Britain there are humane institutions, where, from anxiety for the preservation of life, exertions have been made to recover the dead. In Britain it is esteemed a public duty in certain situations to relieve the afflicted; nor are we destitute of examples of persons neglecting the safety of those whom, from a peculiar profession, they had engaged to succour, rendering themselves obnoxious to the laws of the kingdom. ‡

* *Pococke*, Travels, Vol. ii. Part 2. p. 209. *Howard* on Prisons, p. 113. It is called the Confraternita de Misericordia.

† *Eustace*, Classical Tour, vol. ii. p. 354.

‡ In the year 1754, Dr Morley, who had been called to the assistance of a lady in labour, was prosecuted by her husband for failure in his duty of attendance, as she had died in consequence; and he was found liable in £1000 of damages. The grounds of accusation were his leaving his patient prematurely, and refusing to return.

Some benevolent founders of charitable institutions have been so munificent as hardly to have retained enough to satisfy the expenses of their own funeral; they have not deferred their charities till death, lest it might be said they were liberal when wealth became useless.* They have desired to witness the enjoyment of those blessings of which they were the authors: they have prepared occupation for the industrious, and provided bread for those who had none.

The weak, the impotent, and perishable condition of man, his liability to disease, his exposure to privation, find a happy solace in the sympathy of the benevolent. If every evil cannot be cured, many can be alleviated; and the humane endeavours of the good are compensated by the most eminent success. Whether or not a veil be drawn over their benevolence, the pleasure of conscious rectitude is a reward bestowed by nature on the successful desire of meliorating the fortune of the miserable.

§ 3. *Ingratitude*.—But, how indifferent, how vicious and debased is the heart of man! Wherever the irradiations of virtue beam upon him, there also are their purity liable to be sullied by his unworthiness. Truly the lowest recompence to be reserved for

* Bacon, Essays, § 34: "Defer not charities till death; for certainly if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than his own."

a benefaction is gratitude ; that sentiment by which, without giving any thing away, it is recorded in the mind, that duty, which imposes the obligation of acknowledging a favour from the time it is received until the opportunity when it can be compensated. But, as if it were part of the universal regulations, that the conscious felicity of the benevolent should be tempered by some abatement, so are they perpetually exposed to the wounds of ingratitude.

Were we to investigate the source of this hateful vice, however, we should find perhaps that its subsistence is not so strange as it is reprehensible ; for it might be proved, that the indifference testified for a benefaction ensues from the insensibility of mankind, and that the decaying remembrance which allows its obliteration follows the same principle, permitting the gradual subsidence of the strongest mental impressions.

Yet we are not sufficiently willing to remember.—How feeble is our sense of the parental solicitude watching over our infancy ; of the protection of our ripening age ; the sedulous attention bestowed on cultivating the opening bud of reason ; the anxiety of rendering us equal, and the jealous emulation to give us a superiority above those the most resembling ourselves ! All these early benefits are unknown or unnoticed, or recollection of them is effaced. Neither—we should blush to tell it—is a more lively sense of such inestimable boons manifested towards persons who, free of any natural tie,

have adopted us as their children. Under these circumstances, are not gratitude and veneration so remarkable, that they are eagerly seized as memorials to be recorded by the historian as examples of human virtue? Nay, with diabolical impiety, we forget confessing the love of our parents, sometimes to reproach them with failure in eradicating vices, which our own evil hearts alone had harboured.

If all the passions of mankind, however, preserve certain common features and similitudes, though their character differ among themselves, the intensity of gratitude should abate in proportion to the distance of time from which the benevolence excited it. Thus its decline, rather than its continuance, should ensue: and certainly here lies the main source of the accusation of ingratitude. But we cannot hold this as an adequate extenuation: for as a beautiful object is always interesting, so should the virtue by which we have benefited always be bright.

The great Stagirite justly observed, that nothing grows so soon old as a benefaction: he was even averse to one being received, lest ingratitude might be ascribed to the inability of returning it, and from the inconvenience that might attend the endeavour of doing so.* Probably greater abhorrence is felt

* *Ælian*, *Varie Historiæ*, lib. x. cap. 8. ascribes these sentiments to Aristotle the Cyrenian. More probably they emanated from so profound an observer as the Stagirite.

against ingratitude than against other vices more atrocious, because its very source is denial of the virtue of generosity, which gives it birth : It cannot subsist without a previous boon. It is a sort of double offence thus the more odious ; and to injure a benefactor, seems to exceed the measure of human iniquity. Censure has never been mute in its chastisement. Claudius the Roman emperor borrowed a law from the Athenians, enacting that those freedmen proving ungrateful should be recalled into servitude.* But compulsory ordinances are feeble promoters of virtue : its interests are more dependent on the reciprocal estimation of conduct ; for that flourishes most which obtains the most kindly culture.

Men have been seen, however, who were capable of this enormity : those who were indebted for fortune, for renown even for life, to their benefactors, have perpetrated their wickedness against them, though conscious of the crime. “ No man was more inclined to lift his arm against monarchy than Brutus, but he was withheld by the honours and the favours he had received from Cæsar, who not only had given him his life after the defeat of Pompey at Pharsalia, and pardoned many of his friends at his request, but continued to honour him with his confidence. That very year he had procured him the most honourable pretorship, and he had

* *Suetonius in vita Claudii, § 25.*

named him for the consulship four years after, in preference to Cassius, who was his competitor." Cæsar nevertheless fell by the dagger of Brutus : the man whom he had raised, and loved, and cherished, imbrued his hands in his blood !* As little can we adequately testify our sense of the benefaction to our preservers, as to the parents who have watched us when we could not watch ourselves : Nothing within human powers to offer can ever be a sufficient requital. When the illustrious Cicero was proscribed, a tribune, whom his eloquence had previously saved, solicited Antony's commission to bring him the head of the orator. His request was granted, and he performed the horrid office.† History is never deficient in illustrating the vices of our race : it seems to pause before it can record their virtues. There are fewer kinds of hatred than of love, says Descartes, gratitude is a species of love, but ingratitude is not a passion, it is only a vice, which in the baseness of the soul sometimes leads to hatred.‡ The wounds which we receive are deepest from those we favour : we expect them the least. It is written somewhere that Dominico, a Venetian painter, having fallen under a clandestine attempt on his life, directed himself to be carried to the house of one Castagno, his friend little suspecting that he was the assassin.

* *Plutarch in vita Cæsaris.*

† *Valerius Maximus, lib. v. cap. 3. de Ingratis.*

‡ *Descartes les Passions de l'Ame, Art. 84. 93, 94.*

Voltaire says it is noble to make ingrates. Benevolence, indeed, that which alone can open the sources of ingratitude, is noble, and its exercise admits too frequent illustration of his sentiments: we cannot decry the virtue though we may dispute the prudence of its indiscriminate extension. But the number of the ungrateful would be smaller, were the precautionary precept of sharing our friendship only with those who had proved their fidelity observed. Few of the good can affirm, perhaps, that they have escaped a wound: and many have smarted cruelly in return for the indulgence of their sympathies. The benevolent should be the least protected from the insidious snares of mankind; for the softness of their disposition, always inducing them to think the best, and to melt in kindness, is the very means of their exposure. Some, in yielding too far, have themselves widened the unknown gulf, already yawning to receive them;—a warning to moderate even our most virtuous propensities. In the year 1781, a foreign officer, Von Arenswold, of high reputation for probity and courage, then residing in this country, was incautiously betrayed into difficulties by the zeal of generosity. Unhappily finding himself inextricable, he could see no means of redemption except by the more terrible alternative of suicide. “After you have shed some tears of sensibility over my grave,” said he to a friend, “do not forget that benevolence carried too far, and too little discrimination between those who

have abused my friendship, have been the causes of my death." *

Perhaps it is a prudential maxim never to confide again in those who once have proved deceitful: For if mankind actually shew themselves capable of vice, we neither have any guarantee against its repetition, nor have any right to expect its immediate eradication merely on our account. Many distempers are incurable. Were numerous and distinguished examples of gratitude demanded as an illustration of human virtues, we should look around to those whom we had endeavoured to benefit: we should be embarrassed; the cloud environing the ungrateful would thicken. Did not a renowned monarch maintain, that his benefactions had rendered many of his friends unfaithful? He was forsaken in his dying moments by those who owed him most. †

If ingratitude be so common among private individuals, surely the man must be infatuated who expects it of the public as his due. Are not all in the enjoyment of benefits, do not the whole of us

* *Moore on Suicide*, vol. ii. p. 169.

† Louis XIV. was deserted on his deathbed by his confessor, his mistress, and the son for whom he had the warmest affection.

Isaac Barrow, the celebrated mathematician, disappointed of the expected reward of his fidelity to the royal cause during the republic, is said to have composed these lines on Charles II.

*Te magis optavit rediturum, Carolc nemo
Et nemo sensit te rediisse minus.*

reap advantages, do not we profit by every occurrence, without investigating how, whence, or by whom they come? After a refreshing draught, does the thirsty traveller stop to enquire "who has erected this fountain?" So it is with mankind in general. They are unjust enough to complain of inconveniences, without testifying the slightest indications of gratitude for the comforts they possess. Yet let the truth be told: it is not he who performs the service that uniformly receives the reward: the laurels which he has justly earned, sometimes are reserved to crown another. From genuine patriotism and disinterested zeal we labour for the public good: It is right we should do so, though others fulfil selfish duties. But how rarely are our motives seen, or our exertions suitably appreciated: and how often, unless for a vigorous, upright, and independent mind, full of conscious rectitude, should we retire, overwhelmed with regret and disgust at our unmerited treatment! "Behold," said the Grecian general when a dog fawned on him, "some gratitude for my kindness! but the Thebans, on whom I have conferred many favours, wish to destroy me."* Thus are fervent patriots wounded, while empty minions are distinguished as if they had really been entitled to approbation. Is it because the faculty of discrimination is so rarely bestowed? is it from jealousy the contempt or culpable neglect

* *Ælian, Variæ Historiæ, lib. xiii. cap. 42.*

of virtue?—From the conduct of the Athenians to their most celebrated leaders and legislators, they are accused of having been the most ungrateful of people. They were not single; for Scipio was so indignant at charges of corruption by the Romans, that he remained an exile, resolving that his own country never should be the place of his sepulture.* And Hannibal, the Carthaginian, is said to have ordered a similar inscription for his tomb. The attendance of Agricola, after returning from his victories, being commanded at the palace, he was received with a slight but silent salutation, and allowed to mix with the crowd.† From allegiance to Justinian, who decreed a triumph to honour him, Belisarius refused the regal dignity; yet he lived, if not exposed to want, at least to reproach his country with ingratitude.‡ Of how many similar offences might not we ourselves and our fore-

* *Livy*, lib. xxxviii. cap. 52. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. v. cap. 3.—*Ingrata Patria, ne ossa, quidem mea habes.* Scipio would not submit to a trial, he had such a loftiness of mind, and the train of his successes had been so great, that he knew not how to stoop to the demeanour of one under accusation.

† *Tacitus* in *Agricola*, § 40.

‡ *Procopius* de *Bello Gothico*, lib. ii. cap. 30. Much obscurity reigns over the history of this celebrated commander. *Jornandes* de *Rebus Gothicis*, cap. 60. praises his loyalty, but does not speak of his disgrace. Both his *History*, and the tract *De Regnorum Successione*, close with the reign of Justinian. *Zonaras Annales*, lib. xiv. cap. 7. 9. *Procopius* is precise as to his refusal of the monarchy.

fathers be arraigned, whereby the most distinguished services speedily fell into comparative oblivion, or when the very person of one who was once the idol of the people could be recognised in the multitude only by the few who adhered to him after his prosperity declined? But the performance of selfish duties, those where a reward is contemplated in compensation, is not entitled to equal praise as that disinterested zeal which may plunge the agent in ruin irretrievable if he fails. Men's motives should be always weighed. Some have mistakenly assumed the name of patriots; and they have believed that the ebullitions of discontent were the overflowings of patriotism: they have thought that all were embarked in a common cause, though favour was sustained only by success, and reverses would be inevitably followed by disgrace. When Custine, one of the most renowned and fortunate of the French republican commanders, was accused in the year 1794 on losing popular favour, he found it avail him little to recur to his patriotism, and refer to his preceding services. The nation which he had struggled to benefit, lent a deaf ear to his appeal: nor would the people be satisfied with any thing except his life. There is no country, perhaps, which may not be taxed with ingratitude, and so few individuals that have a permanent and proper sense of a benefaction, that did we abandon the impulse of duty to paction for certain recompence, friendship would be stifled in its birth, the

glow of patriotism chilled in our breasts, and the ardent flame of glory extinguished.

Innumerable benefactions are exacted by the exigencies of mankind, for assistance, patronage, and favour: their sustenance, their health, their comfort, are all alike dependent on the ministry of benevolence; and if it is bestowed, nothing can absolve them from the duty of gratitude. Too many, however, have much in their power, who never dream of the necessities or inconveniences which they might so easily relieve, and the good are left to contend with what should be the portion of the bad. Too many are the first to espy the swelling stream of prosperity when the persecutions of fortune have ceased, and count on its profits. Let him, on whom the iron hand of adversity has laid its pressure, who has drooped under the neglect of those whom it would have cost nothing to cheer, now survey them with an impartial eye. Setting aside just retribution, if he does not spurn their servility from him, in prudence he will shun their society.

Amidst the wounds of ingratitude which we are so often doomed to feel, and the loud complaints obtruded on our ears, eminent examples of the reverse, illustrating gratitude in its purest form, adorn the history of our race, both as individuals and nations. The Turks, to whom our prejudices refuse their actual qualities, because such infinite vices are exposed among them, are distinguished by their remembrance of an obligation. “A benefit conferred

on a Turk, is seldom forgotten. The greater his elevation, the more does he feel and acknowledge the desire and the duty of repaying benefits.* Darius, the son of Hystaspes, after gaining the Persian empire, is said to have rewarded a gift received by him when in a private station : Agrippa, king of Judea, liberally renumerated a draught of water which a slave had offered to him when in distress.†

Ingratitude is common, indeed, from the insensibility of the mind, from the feeble impressions upon it, and the facility with which the stronger emotions are effaced. It is not within the compass of human ability, always to preserve with equal intensity what has been felt or experienced. The depraved will think of them the least, while benefactions are indelibly recorded in the breast of the virtuous : their remembrance is awakened with the presence of the benefactor.

Although the mind seems evidently to possess certain common features and properties throughout mankind wherever situated, the peculiarities of the system or of individuals are many ; and in none are they seen more conspicuously than in sensibility : it is on this alone that all our preceding discourse is founded.

Insensibility, indifference, or if we may design it,

* *Thornton*, Present State of Turkey, p. 293. *Hobhouse*, Journey through Albania, Letter 47. vol. ii. p. 912.

† *Josephus*, lib. xviii. cap. 6. § 6.

that mediocrity of the mind which is neither employed in active good nor in active evil, seems more allied to the malevolent affections, from admitting the subsistence of the latter without any desire to interpose, and witnessing the good fortune of our neighbours without participating in their pleasure.

A very learned author is of opinion, that "one of the most remarkable circumstances belonging to the savage state of mankind, is an apathy or insensibility of disposition, which they almost universally discover."* A necessitous condition, it is true, will blunt the feelings: we are too much occupied by the agonies of our own personal pains, to think at the moment of the suffering of others, though anxious in our sympathies when we have none. Those to whom a life of hardships is incident, who find difficulty in providing for themselves, and sometimes have nothing to spare, cannot entertain the same solicitude for their fellow creatures, which is allowed by the mind relaxing into joy amidst plenty. Hence is the living infant consigned to the same grave as its departed mother, and hence are the wounded left to perish on the field they have bravely contested. Of the Africans on the coast of Guinea it is said, that "prosperity and adversity are no otherwise distinguishable in them than in their clothing and shaving of the head:" that they tes-

* *Falconer*, Remarks on Climate and Way of Life, on the Disposition of Mankind, p. 261.

tify so much indifference, as to perplex the spectator whether they have experienced good or evil; for they return from a victory rejoicing, "but if on their side they are beaten out of the field and utterly routed, they yet feast and are merry, and dance, and can cheerfully sport round a grave."* Apparent indifference, indeed, as we shall afterwards see, is one of the lower testimonies of fortitude, which refuses to yield to the demonstration of some of the warmer emotions or an acknowledgment of what is endured from toil or abstinence. But of the North Americans we are told, if one be acquainted that his children have signalised themselves against an enemy, he generally answers, "It is well," and without any testimonies of pleasure he makes very little further enquiry about it. On the contrary, if informed that his children are slain or taken prisoners, he makes no complaints; he only replies, "It does not signify;" and probably, for some time at least, asks not how it happened.* Certainly indifference paves the way to cruelty; none will be cruel who sympathize in sufferings. But humanity and mercy are rather the concomitants of civilization: the fountains of benevolence open according as the condition of man improves; and unless from some frenzied perversion they should accompany him, and flow with the greatest purity

* *Bosman*, Description of the Coast of Guinea, Letter 9.

† *Carver*, Travels through the Interior of North America, p. 240.

as it attains the highest refinement. We have never heard a discourse on benevolent savages except in the rarest instances ; while all observers are occupied by their cruelty and vice. If some contrasts be exhibited, they are restricted, with very few exceptions, to parental regard, as if it were necessary to prove that the beings described were men. Without the pressure of necessity they behold misery with indifference—spectacles of pain impart pleasure—they are steeled to the aspect of suffering.—The missionary John Campbell, speaking of a city in Africa, remarks, “ We saw a child about eight years old standing in the middle of the street weeping, and being almost a skeleton it attracted our attention. We enquired respecting its disease, when the women told us the child was well enough, that want of food had brought it to that state, that the father and mother were poor : that he had gone away with another woman, and was hunting in the south : that the mother was gone to the westward searching for food. Neither the men, women, nor children present, seemed, by their countenances, to express the least sympathy for this forsaken starving child. They said, laughing, that we might take the child with us if we pleased.”* The benevolent missionary and his companions did so : they conducted both it and its mother to the European settlements. Had all other missionaries been as well

* *Campbell, Travels in South Africa*, p. 266.

occupied, the savages among whom they have had the courage to venture would have become sooner civilized. Humanity is a good foundation for morality; as the cause of virtue is best promoted by holding forth the lure of its immediate profits. Man is composed of stubborn materials, misled by selfishness, ignorance, prejudice, and his passions, when moral principles of easy practice should keep him right.

Crantz, an earlier missionary, in Greenland, says, if a stranger dies without leaving adult sons, no one pays the smallest attention to his forlorn widow. Every door is shut against her; and after carrying off most of her goods, "her countrymen are hard-hearted enough to see her perish with cold and hunger without offering her the smallest assistance. When people on shore observe a boat upset at sea, if it be not occupied by a near relation or friend, they can look on with the utmost unconcern, and even enjoy a savage delight in watching the struggles of the expiring sufferer." * Apathy therefore is allied to malevolence, otherwise assistance would be eagerly proffered. The northern Indians can view the deepest distress of those not immediately connected with them without the slightest emotion. A picture of suffering is the subject of enjoyment. "I have been present," says an enterprising traveller, "when one of them, imitating

* *Crantz, History of Greenland, Book III. chap. iv. § 5.*

the groans, distorted features, and contracted position of a man who died in the most excruciating pain, put the whole company but myself in the most violent fit of laughter." * Humanity, unless in females, and this is seen under some glaring exceptions, certainly is no virtue of the ruder tribes. Sometimes the unprotected have to dread the barbarity of women as much as the barbarity of men ; † and although infanticide commonly results from necessity, this cannot be always pleaded by mothers. ‡

Doubtless, apathy is produced by frequent spectacles of misery, else how could we account for mankind being alike qualified skilfully to perform painful operations, and to inflict cruel punishments ? The judge has often presided at the execution of his own sentence. We do not know whether this remains the custom of any modern European states : but some despots have delighted even in being the most dextrous executioners ; and a modern Persian prince, said to be humane in all besides, witnesses without concern every possible mutilation to which he has condemned offenders. § A certain train and transition of sympathetic feeling also are requisite to

* *Hearne*, Journey to the Northern Ocean, p. 340.

† *Paddock*, Shipwreck of the Oswego, var. loc.

‡ *Grant*, Voyage of Discovery, p. 131 : " The women of New Holland do sometimes destroy their children at their birth, and even afterwards if they prove froward."

§ *Pottinger*, Travels in Beloochistan and Sinde, p. 214, 215. —Of Charles IX. vide *Masson* ap Contin. des Mem. de *Castelnau*, tom. iii. p. 16.

awaken commiseration. Yet many can be very easily diverted during the representation of the deepest tragedy: and assuredly its impression on the most numerous and polished audience is very transient, judging by the universal enjoyment of the succeeding farce. In those real tragedies where human life is forfeited by the laws, all can testify how little sympathy is shewn for the unhappy culprit, even where his offence, magnified by our sanguinary ordinances, is venial in the eyes of the multitude.

It appears that the malevolent propensities of mankind, not only being more numerous, but more easily aroused than the benevolent, give birth to others branching out to infinity, and almost all of evil tendency. The benevolent affections are usually restricted to one object; nor do they multiply much in their subsistence. Indifference admits of passive malevolence; sensibility may spur to active mischief though void of personal profit, or it allows of depravity with it.

But among civilized society, the zeal of bigotry and the fervour of politics have given a greater scope to malevolence than perhaps any other causes; a humiliating example of the degradation of the human understanding! It would be almost impossible to comprise a description of their consequences in any bounds. Yet nothing is more remarkable than that the very adoration of the Omnipotent, the honour of earthly monarchs, our love of order, our abhorrence of imposture, our upright lives, should induce the hatred of the vicious!

The expediency of benefactions is commonly the subject of longer study, consideration, and doubt, than resolution to injure. Our resentments are ready on every occasion, but the first sight of an object in distress does not always awaken sympathy. Every one is liable to irritation, and hastens to revenge; but all are not prepared for friendship, compassion, or philanthropy. Our resentments, almost without exception, exceed the extent of the injury: our gratitude usually falls short of the benefaction. Offences make a lasting impression; favours are speedily forgot. Did the opposite human propensities approach to an equipoise, this order should rather be inverted. Perhaps nature has necessarily decreed it otherwise; for her provisions seem less adapted to the refinements of the social state, than to what is exacted by the original and grosser condition of mankind. Therefore what we deem the most culpable imperfections, from beholding their improper indulgence, are probably indispensable for the benefit of the world, when preserved under suitable restraint.

In thus attempting to expose the evolution of some of the stronger passions, elicited by the necessity for self-preservation, and of those gentle affections whereon the social compact rests, we venture to conclude that they result from the subsistence of a benevolent design regulating the harmonics of the universe.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE ORIGINAL DISPOSITION OF MAN.

ARE mankind radically good or bad by nature? Do we originate with the predominance of virtuous or of vicious principles, to be unfolded from our birth, or do they balance and neutralize each other in their evolution? Proud of our pre-eminence at the head of the creation, and ashamed of being classed with unworthiness, we are prone to view ourselves with a partial eye, and to answer as shall honour us the most.

The grand aim of nature, we affirm, is the pleasure and happiness of mortals: for this are given the delicacies of sense, and the goods of the universe. The tendency to perfection must be favoured by the healthful state of the system, nor could sufficient maturity be otherwise attained; therefore health predominates over disease.—Virtue is essential to felicity: The world would be plunged in intolerable misery, by the excess of discord, deceit, and cruelty, over peace, and truth, and humanity; therefore virtue predominates over vice. Our opinions are illustrated by examples of many worthy persons, of whom we have heard, or who are known to us. We have ourselves witnessed the

most splendid display of the dignity of human excellence: and perhaps we have experienced all the tenderness of love that can warm the generous breast. We willingly decide on the radical goodness of man. He stands the image of his Creator. His person is of beautiful symmetry and grace. His intellect is a blazing meteor, his soul is refulgent with virtue: He illuminates the world.—Besides, our piety tells us that it is not evil which has been formed, but good: that as all the works of Omnipotence are such as tend to glory, and as the bad can never be glorious, man must be originally good.

But is not this the argument of sophistry? Or, assuming the favourable and most flattering view of the question, is not the other kept in concealment? Can we truly go farther on impartial evidence than affirming, that if the vices do not preside over our birth, neither do the virtues.

Let us reflect:—Our whole existence seems occupied in correcting what are deemed the imperfections of nature: All our best, our most amiable and most resplendent qualities, are obtained by what we conclude to be the farthest removal from the original state. The personal beauty of man in his own eyes, indeed, surpasses that of other living beings, and he therefore presumes himself to be the chosen work of Heaven: he would rival angels. But those endowed with absolute symmetry are extremely few: real beauty is of the rarest dispensa-

tion : entire nations are hideous to behold. Abiding identically by our natural configuration in all its parts, we should become offensive to ourselves, or custom alone would reconcile us to the deformity : And at length discovering the truth, we might be less eager to arrogate the image of the Creator. Nature bestows the precious materials of the human mind, but it is art which renders them transcendent over the rest of animated creatures. Without it they would remain in no distant analogy to rude, inert, brutish matter.

The nearer therefore the approach of our personal and intellectual system to the original state, it seems in the lower degradation : With the utmost care, and the highest cultivation, it is only advancing in improvement : for perfection is unknown.

Perhaps the innate seeds of virtue are sown in the heart, which, were they fostered, would lead to a happy life : * For if the aim of nature be pleasure, not in evanescence, but in permanence, all her designs must be good. Perhaps it is in our incessant efforts to alter our condition, that we repress their vegetation, and blight them as they put forth their flourish. We are familiar with infantile innocence, for it is daily before our eyes : but man has never yet been seen in his pristine state, restricted to solitary couples or families only, on his

* *Cicero Tusculanarum Quæstionum*, lib. iii. § 1.

native soil. In the scantiest tribes, wherein numbers may be circumscribed, it is proved he may remain stationary in barbarism during ages, without the slightest advancement towards civilization.* Societies are the seminaries of vice: contending interests originate in the smallest; even family affection can scarcely banish them: thence human propensities, if good, may have been corrupted, were it only by the apple of discord always rolling among them. But they appear to improve as we leave those approximations to the original state, on which our reasoning is founded.

It is then that man is a terrible destroyer: that he spreads terror and desolation around him. In his natural condition, resembling a beast of prey, he is ferocious in contention, and merciless in victory: Nay, he enjoys an atrocity at which all the brute creation recoil,—he feasts on the flesh of his fellow-men. His infancy is perverse: his adolescence is sensual: his maturity unfolds into arrogance and tyranny. A stranger to genuine fortitude, no laudable pursuits are followed with perseverance; he can neither bear sudden prosperity nor sudden reverses with equanimity.† Making a boast of his courage, the savage is careful in avoiding danger:

* *Dampier, Voyages*, vol. ii. p. 464. vol. iii. chap. 3. may be compared with the most recent accounts of the coast of New Holland, which he visited in 1688 and 1699.

† *Ammianus Marcellinus*, lib. xvi. in fine. *Nativo more sunt barbari humiles in adversis, dispaesque in secundis.*

he steals upon his foe, pierces him in the back, instead of soliciting an honourable combat; and after a treacherous victory, he often mangles the body of the slain. Ignorant of generosity, he devotes the bravest of his captives to some barbarous punishment, or he reserves him to be devoured at some solemn festival. Have his enemies fallen in battle, their bones adorn the conqueror in triumph, or they are suspended in his hut in commemoration of the prowess obtaining them a place.—In the most civilized condition of man, independently of an inherent proclivity to vice, a variety of new propensities awaken. The rudiments that characterize the savage still remain: His passions are always liable to excess: he is incessantly the sport of anger, and his resentments are crowned by vengeance: When blood has been shed, he does not scruple to shed it again: he is proud in despotism, and arrogant in extermination. Ambition, avarice, falsehood, mark his footsteps, and all the long train of iniquity engendered by political fervour, and the rancour of bigotry. But the passions are held in more subjugation from principle: the softer virtues are cherished, the number of the benevolent is greater, and at length we come to shudder at inhumanity.

Is all this the germination of virtue, or only the discipline of education?—"But we say man is a tame animal, who, with a happy disposition under proper discipline, may be rendered mild, but void of education he is the most savage of all the ani-

mals that the earth produces." * Notwithstanding apathy distinguishes some of the ruder tribes, many of the kind affections are occasionally elicited as warmly as among the civilized: nor can they be uniformly refused the praise of virtue. How could even the smallest societies subsist without it?— Though all their passions appear more furious and uncontrollable than those of polished mankind, powerful inducements can sometimes hold them subdued.

A shipwrecked British mariner fell into the hands of a tribe of islanders in the Eastern Ocean, every member of which testified a lively interest in his welfare, preserved him in safety, relieved his wants, and contributed to the means of his returning to his own country. He found them hospitable, mild, and benignant; considerate, amiable, and pacific, in regard to himself, and he rejoiced in the opportunity of enumerating their virtues. They seemed an exception to the nature of savage mankind, for they could have as easily destroyed him as have aided his rescue; and they were willing to become civilized. These islanders so humane, nevertheless were accustomed to put their prisoners of war to death in cold blood.† ●

* *Plato de Legibus*, lib. vi.—lib. ix.

† *Keate*, Account of the Pelew Islands passim. *Hockin*, Supplement to the Account of the Pelew Islands, var. loc. A late author accuses the Italians of the same enormity, "even before the eyes of their officers." *Stendhal*, Rome, Naples, et Florence, en 1817, p. 347.

Generosity is not unknown to the middle stages of civilization, more than the other kind affections which sometimes embellish the most degraded station. The courtesy of the men, and the female blandishments in territories under a genial clime, have been seen to accompany unequalled bounty where they were only quitting the barbarous state. "It is no uncommon thing for them to complain they are dying of hunger, and as soon as they receive a morsel to divide it among as many as are present, the first receiver generally leaving himself the smallest share, and often none at all."* Yet warfare steels the soul to mercy, and the same tribes of people have been known to make a sport of human misery.†

Such examples of virtue are few: but those of every vice and cruelty incident to mankind, are incessantly offered in illustration of the human disposition in the savage state: and as narrow resemblance is found between the temper, the propensities, and the expanding intellect of children with those of untaught man, so has a common nature been ascribed to all. A tribe of Marquesans, on whom nature has lavished her choicest favours in admirable personal symmetry to the men, and the most

* *Missionary Voyage of the Ship Duff*, p. 275: relative to the natives of Tongataboo. *Kotzebue, Voyage of Discovery*, vol. ii. var. loc. inclines to speak as favourably of the inhabitants of the insular chains called Ralick and Radack.

† *Narrative of a Four Years Residence at Tongataboo*, p. 188.

fascinating beauty to the other sex, betray a character which is directly compared with that of wild beasts : and the author concludes his account of them, saying, “ it is pretty evident that they have neither social institutions, religion, nor humane feelings in any degree whatever—in a word, that no traces of good qualities are to be found among them : that they undoubtedly belong to the very worst of mankind.” *

Notwithstanding the remarkable depravation of the sensible faculties and the moral virtues, and although a multitude of barbarians whose existence disgraces the human name, whose ferocious manners disguise their properties if they have any, at present occupy many coasts and countries, those actually the most degraded of our race inhabiting the Australasian continent and Van Diemen's Land, are not equally wicked. From concurring testimony, they are neither so fierce, so cruel, so treacherous, or ungovernable. Indiscretion, in every stage, leads many to habitual vice as much as inclination ; and becoming familiarized with customs, seems to efface the discriminative powers, or to forbid reflection. The fashions of mankind, however, are no extenuation of the absence of virtue : vice is not palliated by its frequency ; for bad principles can be as little the profession of a good people, as a bad people can be

* *Krusenstern, Voyage round the World, vol. i. p. 168. 182.*

adorned by the brightest excellence. It is only the definition of the lower virtues that is paradoxical: for that assuredly is always good which tends to our own credit, and the happiness of our fellow creatures in whatever station. It is a mistake to conceive that because mankind will not reflect on the consequences of the actions following the impulse of their nature, that they are not censurable.* An Asiatic tribe is described to have believed “every thing lawful that procured them the satisfaction of their wishes and passions, and thinking that only to be sinful from which they apprehend danger or ruin: so that they neither reckon murder, suicide, adultery, oppression, or the like, iniquitous.”†

Our whole existence we say is spent in the corrections of nature: if savages be wicked, it is from indulging their propensities, and obeying the impulse of their passions too readily; therefore, from their betraying a greater variety of vice, man appears the worse the nearer we can view him to his natural state. But between that and the civilized condition there are many stages. Yet not more than between the infantile and the adult state, corrected

* *Lichtenstein*, Travels, vol. ii. p. 51: “The rude rough man, left entirely in a state of nature, is not in himself evil and wicked.” His acts are only to be considered criminal, “when the perpetrators themselves are sensible and conscious that they are really so.”

† *Krascheninikow*, Description of Kamtschatka by Grieve, p. 204.

by all the powers of precept, example, and education. *

The progress of society to civilization exhibits a long and anxious struggle, whether in private contention with the passions for dominion over ourselves, or in public strife for the mastery of others. Discord is its earliest invader. All nations go to war, all are rent by civil dissensions, all break into rebellions, overthrow their rulers, and revel in the licentiousness of anarchy. All are ambitious, full of intrigue, and perfidy; they are barbarous to each other, and ferocious towards strangers on interference to amend the corruptions of their government, or to cure the errors of their religion.

Let the history of Great Britain, or of any other country, be surveyed from its remotest origin, the course is uniform: because mankind pass through a number of regular gradations: War in its most horrific aspect, rapine, treachery, and treason, banished the comfort, and stained the name of its successive generations. Man was opposed to man, desperate resistance kindled the rage of combatants thirsting for mutual slaughter; he who could not destroy was sure to perish. Iniquitous usurpations, oppressions of the defenceless, and the profligacy of

* *La Bruyere* les Caracteres, tom. ii. p. 25: "Children are proud, disdainful, envious, inquisitive, indolent, volatile, timid, intemperate, deceitful, dissembling. They readily laugh and cry. Trifles rejoice and afflict them; they shun injury, but gladly offend. They are already men."

power in lawless depredations or the indulgence of sensual appetites, break in upon us as lights amidst the darkness of the middle ages, glaring reproach on their authors. Next are the visitations of grievous intolerance for faith in religion and adherence to politics, alternately persecuting for the truth and the errors of judgment. The dawnings of civilization, which should have brought peace and tranquillity to the people, made their homes happy, and their country a sure asylum, were disturbed by arbitrary exactions, constructive treasons, and merciless punishments for crimes impossible to human commission. All the record of history teems with the vices of the great, and the barbarism of the multitude. Let us contemplate the castellated ruins, and the monastic remains which have overspread the face of these kingdoms. We call them venerable relics. They as often sheltered the oppressor and harboured the profligate, as they consecrated the abode of piety, and protected innocence, in the turbulence of the times.

Again,—What a frightful view of human depravity is exhibited by the legislative code of every polished people: what a repulsive catalogue of iniquities, all of which should have preceded the penalties denounced against their repetition!

If the passions and propensities be gifted by nature to render us originally good, how does it follow that we are so importunately solicited by them? yet doing what nature bids us do induces evil, and the

fairest prospect of felicity consists in refusing obedience, and binding them down under firm controul. If man be virtuous by nature, how should it follow that he must be constantly fettered by menaces of punishment; that he is never more dangerous than when he has nothing to dread; that he is then so ready to plunge into excesses disgraceful to himself, to terrify the mild and pacific, to environ them with desolation? Who can resist the seductions of pleasure, the temptations of avarice, or wield his power in mercy?—"What though fire consume half a city—what though bulwarks be swept down by floods, or a country be swallowed up by an earthquake, or disappear under volcanic eruptions—these are incidents consequent on the laws governing the universe. Man in such circumstances cannot complain of man. But where sovereignty is characterized by absolute despotism, he is the most mortal enemy of his kind, and always ready to bereave his fellows of life." *

If we review the conduct of the ancient Jews, of the Greeks, or the Romans, towards the countries they invaded, their inhabitants had better have prayed for the visitations of fire or pestilence. If we ask how the moderns have established their sovereignty in the West or in the East; was it by mild persuasion and humane interference to promote

* *Olivier, Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, l'Egypte et la Perse, tom. iii. p. 93.*

their comfort, that the natives have allowed bands of foreigners to occupy their strongholds, to dwell in their cities, levy tribute from their lands, and from the fruits of their industry; or was it by force, by fraud and stratagem, that the invaders made their way? The Peruvians were laden as beasts of burden by those who came to seek for their gold; they were trepanned into slavery, and their habitations cast down by the guests whom they had received with open arms, and courteously entertained. But, independent of the casualties of nature, how, in the course of few generations, did twelve millions of them disappear, unless by merciless carnage? * Sixty millions of people bow before the British sceptre in the East. Have our wars been the wars of justice, right, and mercy?

The purest virtue is scarcely susceptible of definition; but the extreme of vice is cruelty, and the excess of cruelty is to kill. Whatever questions may be agitated about the compensation of indignities and personal sufferings, whether it be more grievous to endure the one or to bear the other, whether mental pains do not surpass bodily distress, and how far either may be carried, none will deny that wounding a limb is inferior to depriving us of it; and that all injuries offered to the person are lower

* *Las Casas*, Relation des Voyages et des Decouvertes que les Espagnols ont fait dans les Indes Occidentales: passim. The author has not been able to obtain the original of this work, which has a different title.

than privation of life. "The utmost harm that malice can do is to kill." * Therefore the desire to destroy is the highest criterion of vicious inclination, and the perpetration of murder the most atrocious crime. Yet there may be horrible aggravations in the means of commission, and the man called merciful who rescues the victim by a mortal blow.

It is false to believe that Nero, Domitian, Caligula, or any of the ancient emperors, were worse than many potentates of modern times: It is false to believe that the Romans, though preserving captives for their profit, could not also be capricious in their cruelty. "So the soldiers, out of their wrath and hatred to the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one manner, and another after another, by way of jest, to the crosses, when their number was so great that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies." †

The Roman emperors were not more cruel than some of the Persian, ‡ the Turkish, § nay, some of the European sovereigns of Christian countries; ||

* *Reynolds* on the Passions and Faculties of the Soul, p. 94.

† *Josephus*, Bellum Judaicum, lib. v. cap. xi. § 1.

‡ *Knolles*, History of the Turks, vol. ii. p. 43. *Cantemir*, History of the Othman Empire, p. 248. *Eton*, Survey of the Turkish Empire, p. 143. 146.

§ *Malcolm*, History of Persia, vol. ii. p. 801, note. *Hanway*, British Trade over the Caspian Sea, vol. ii. var. loc.

|| *Hoveden*, Annales, ap: Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores post Bedam, p. 697, 698, ad an. 1197. *Miot* Memoires des Expéditions en Egypte et en Syrie, p. 136. 238, ad an. 1799.

and all the vice they have displayed has been rivalled by examples of individual ferocity.

But it is pleasing to consider that, by means of civilization, and by the culture of virtue, the latter are so reduced: It is not that civilization can entirely eradicate evil propensities, and man, even from the highest refinement, is ever prepared to relapse into barbarism, by abandoning self-controul; but many are restrained by the habitual love of well-doing; and their principles pass to posterity. The placid are environed by placidity: the temperate by temperance.—The instances already adduced, and those to follow, all illustrate how great the compound of contesting inclinations in individuals, how diversified the mixture of the passions among the multitude. The multitude, however, among civilized nations, unless conglomerated under sudden excitations, are seldom uniform in their designs of mischief; individuals branch out in excesses, the mass of the people does not seem animated by one common soul. But the whole body of barbarians seems ready for extremities, male and female, young and old, thirst for cruelty: instead of awaiting the stimulus of extraordinary occasions, it appears to be habitual. As striking examples of individual ferocity can be afforded from among the most polished as from among the most savage people; but they are not so common, which proves the greater prevalence of humanity. Many instances are seen in those convulsions giving rise to the angry passions, and the jealous intolerance nurturing malevolent pride. The children of

Saladin requested their father's permission to behead some Christian prisoners, believing it laudable to destroy the enemies of their religion.—“God forbid,” he replied, “that I should consent that my children shall make a sport of shedding human blood, of which they do not know the value!”* The women of a certain territory in the north, it is affirmed, now desire their husbands and friends going to war to bring them home a prisoner, merely that they may enjoy the pleasure of destroying him; thus belying in their rude condition that higher repute than men, which we would willingly bestow on their refinement.† It is in the most barbarous stage that the least account is made of life: It is then that renown keeps pace with slaughter, and privileges are conferred according to the number of the slain. Humanity seems proscribed. Virtue may, and it does exist in a humble state; but its unadulterated purity is rather to be sought in more elevated stages,—where, finding some ingenuous mind that has no aversion to discipline, it may take root and flourish. It depends on the inclinations of the heart exclusively, not on the powers of the intellect: the most able have been the most flagitious; and the nature of many originally cast in the happiest mould, has been perverted to vice, as some whom Fortune called to

* *Marin Histoire de Saladin*, tom. ii. p. 201.

† *Hearne, Journey to the Northern Ocean*, p. 266.

preside over the destinies of the Roman empire most glaringly evinced.* Descending to later æras, where the refinements of an artificial condition combine with the vices of nature, an extraordinary compound ensues. The novelties of society generate other consequences than a solitary state: they afford the opportunity of offering illustrious examples of moral virtue: but they are also productive of vicious propensities otherwise unknown. Every successive stage is distinguished from that which went before.

“The elder Servin presenting his son to me,” says Sully, “requested me to endeavour to make him an honest man: but observing that he had faint hopes of it, not from any deficiency of spirit and ability, but from his natural proclivity to every kind of vice. He was right. I discovered in the younger Servin a miracle and a monster: the association of the best talents with the worst dispositions, admits of no other name. Let a mind so lively be conceived as scarcely to be ignorant of any thing that should be known; a comprehension so ready as to seize all at once; so prodigious a memory as to forget nothing. Philosophy, mathematics, particularly fortification and design, even theology, were quite familiar to him. He knew the

* *Ælius Spartianus* Antoninus Caracallus, cap. xi.—Antoninus Geta, cap. vii. *Suetonius* in vita Caligulæ, § 22: In vita Neronis. *Plutarch* in vita Syllæ. *Seneca* de Consolatione ad Helvidium, cap. 9: ad Polybium, cap. 36.

whole learned languages and their different dialects, and was such an adept in imitation, that he might have passed alike for a native of any of the European countries, or for an excellent comedian. He was a good poet, thoroughly skilled in music, sung agreeably, and played on almost every instrument. He was equally adroit at athletic exercises, and at games of amusement; and he was acquainted with almost every mechanic trade. Reverse the picture; he was false, treacherous, cruel, cowardly, a drunkard and a glutton, a gamester and a cheat, a debauchee, a blasphemer, an atheist, in a word, there were found in him all the vices adverse to nature, to honour, religion, and society. Such he shewed himself until the end, when he died of dissipation in the flower of his age, still, with a glass in his hand, swearing and denying God.* Nevertheless, no specific atrocity, whereby his fellow-creatures were injured, is laid to the charge of this reprobate. All his qualities, almost without exception, belonged to the artificial or most civilized condition of man: all his vices distinguish barbarians in the lower stages. It is not explained that his conduct aimed at the personal safety of any individual, which has been here assumed as the criterion of iniquity, from inability to shew how it can be exceeded. He was a reprobate, and his actions recoiled against himself. But some are malevolent in the contrivance of mischief,

* *Sully, Memoires, liv. xiv. tom. iii. p. 209. ad an. 1603.*

cruel in its perpetration, wantonly regardless of their neighbours, and wickedly offer them evil merely for gratification in their suffering, to afflict their friends, or even to render them like themselves. Persons have scorned life, provided they could sacrifice the objects of their animosity: they have been desperate in their revenge. We have even heard, in atrocious though lower resentments, of some who wilfully contracted disease purposely to contaminate others; and of some who, already distempered, eagerly imparted the contagion—varieties in the exercise of malevolence seemingly beyond credibility. Mankind are less disposed to complain under a common calamity; their misfortunes appear lighter if none be exempt; but to injure the innocent merely because we are injured, either by the hand of nature or the hand of the wicked, requires no ordinary combination of the passions.—Not long ago a female at Cracow in Poland, adorned with the most beautiful hair, was deeply mortified by an attack of the distressing malady peculiar to that country. Amidst her regret for her own disfiguration, however, she felt that it would be less intolerable, provided those around her could be reduced to the same condition: for this would preserve an equality for herself among women. Therefore, after wearing her finest head-dress, she sent it to one of her friends, who soon after contracted the disease.*

* *La Fontaine Traité de la Plique Polonaise*, p. 13.

Nothing nearly so unpardonable is imputed to the abandoned Servin. But civilized society has harboured many who have so greatly exceeded the iniquities of either, that their deeds would not be numbered in the same catalogue ; and the nature of them is such as to preclude detail in these pages. They would tend to prove the most singular coincidence in the invention, and an incredible uniformity in the perpetration of human enormities ; or sometimes an ingenious deliberation, whereby the detestable agent seemed to study how he could excel his precursors in the fashion of his cruelty.* At different times, and in different civilized European countries, an anomalous class of wretches has appeared, disgracing humanity by their wanton barbarity to helpless females only. It is said that many years have elapsed, since monsters in human shape, dispersed in certain cities in Italy, watched their opportunity of wounding ladies in the streets with a sharp knife on the face, or for want of one cut them with the edge of some coinage. Between 1788 and 1790, this diabolical cruelty was renewed in London. Numerous females were pierced with deep wounds from sharp weapons, or received such injuries that it was dangerous to walk unguarded, and many of the sufferers fainted from terror and loss of blood on the spot. Alarm spread throughout the Metro-

* *Coxe*, Account of the Russian Discoveries, var. loc. *Sauer*, Account of an Expedition by Billings, Appendix, p. 56. *Barrow*, Voyage to Cochin China, p. 354.

polis, large rewards were offered for detection, and many engines set to work; yet the perpetrator or perpetrators eluded them all, nor has the source of the atrocity been ever elucidated satisfactorily.* The British are the most civilized, and at the same time the most humane of people. It was not always so; the day has been when many offenders did “daily beat, wound, imprison, and maim divers of the king’s lieges, and afterwards purposely cut out their tongues, or put out their eyes.”† The terms of the absolution and penance of one of a party are yet preserved, who had nearly thus treated an ancient northern prelate:‡ and even in late and modern times, the barbarous dispositions of Ireland are the reproach of the empire. Sometimes the British mob still contrive to murder in their sport those whom the laws have consigned to indignity only; they are turbulent and vindictive on most occasions, but they sometimes open their ranks to allow the malefactor’s flight. In addition to other causes, the mildness, uniformity, and rarity of public punishments, undoubtedly has contributed to humanize the nation. The spectator and the offender become mutually hardened by frequency and exposure: and persons who do not reap actual pleasure from such horrid spectacles, soon grow as insensible to sufferings from the hands of others as from their

* *Account of the Barbarities lately practised by Monsters.*
—*Trial of Rynwick Williams*, July 8. 1790.

† *Statute* 5th Henry IV. cap. 5. A. D. 1403.

‡ *Innocentius III.* Epistolæ, lib. v. epist. 77. tom. i. p. 663.

own. Those judges therefore commit a capital error, who appoint a malefactor to be led half naked through the streets, and scourged to the blood every where, that none of the inhabitants may escape the sight.

But where shall we find a parallel with the iniquities of revolutionary France? where have the groans of the innocent been enjoyed by the multitude, where have the most exalted been the most ferocious, spurning the claims of justice, deaf to the prayers for mercy, steeled to the tears of sorrow, drenching their native soil with the blood of their countrymen? Which is the people that has sent terror to stalk abroad among themselves; which has gratified individual vengeance under the wicked deception of administering the laws; which has committed judicial massacres during 18 months in 148 places; and where have the tribunals marched with an engine of death in their train? * The crimes of Robespierre, Marat, Le Bon, Fouquier Tinville, Collot d'Herbois, Carriere, and many, many more, stamp eternal infamy on their names, for they were the crimes of cruelty. Nero and Caligula did no more than destroy the obnoxious in detail, but premiums were sought for the invention of speed in destruction:† And these sanguinary wretches, impatient of delay, greedily swept away the lives of their fellow citizens in hundreds at a

* *Prudhomme* Dictionnaire, Reflexions Preliminaires, p. xviii. xxii.—*Larochefauquelein*, Memoires.

† *Paris as it was and is*, vol. i. p. 125.

blow.* Neither age nor sex was spared: no virtue was respected. It seemed as if the gates of the infernal regions had been opened to let loose the demons imprisoned by them to torture miserable mankind. Demoralization rapidly pursued in the tread of anarchy; the nation was relapsing into the savage state.

How then, it will be asked, is virtue promoted by civilization? Is not the nature of man as atrociously wicked in his refined as in his rude condition?

The enormities of the French revolution, indeed, transcend description, if compared with all that has been shewn by other nations: it amply illustrates, that "the utmost harm that malice can do is to kill." But its perpetrators were satisfied with life. Theirs was a war of simple extermination: they did not prolong personal suffering, though sometimes unsparing of mental agonies,—and in this they differed from mankind in the savage state. There were exceptions, indeed, but they were few.

In investigating so interesting a question as, whether man comes radically good or bad from the hand of nature, it is some consolation to reflect, that the worst propensities of the human race have excited the greatest attention. It is gratifying to remember, that if the records of the world are more

* *Rainsford*, Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti. *Decourtilz*, Voyages d'Un Naturiliste, tom. i. ii. var. loc. These and other works shew how the thirst of blood was transported to distant climes, along with the ferocious revolutionary agents.

sullied by vice than embellished by virtue, it is because the mild and pacific exercise of moral excellence renders itself less notorious than depravity. It is by unaccountable excesses that we are astonished and confounded; those whereby the passions projected from their orbit overwhelm the throne of reason: and here certainly we are arrested in our endeavours to illustrate the real disposition both of civilized and uncultivated man. But it is impossible to discover how the circumstances of the world could advance, did the prevalence of positive evil exceed the prevalence of positive good: and perhaps we must agree, that "while histories relate wars, seditions, and the corruptions and intrigues of courts, they are silent about the vastly superior numbers who, in safe obscurity, are virtuously or innocently employed in the natural business and enjoyments of mankind."*

The formation of a virtuous community is not a hopeless or chimerical task, yet one of extraordinary difficulty, and of doubtful permanence. Though the philanthropist disinterestedly undertaking it, be foiled in the issue, his exertions will merit the highest commendation; for undoubtedly they will disseminate good. Evidently its basis must be sustained by simplicity, by soothing the passions, by repressing the malevolent and eliciting the benevolent affections. Constant occupation from the beginning of strength, the satisfaction of na-

* *Hutcheson*, Moral Philosophy, Book I. chap. 9. § 2.

tural wants, and the gratification of innocent wishes, promote the content of humble life, guard against the invasion of artificial desires, and the pursuit of vicious indulgence. But it is not easy to anticipate the secure advance from mediocrity: for excellence is scarcely to be attained without encouraging emulation, and thence arousing passions the most dangerous to order and tranquillity:—Nor in possession of the smallest comforts, can mankind be restrained from enlarging their sphere. Probably the community, fostered by its favourable condition, might increase too rapidly: and although a machine which would be unsuitable at large may operate exquisitely in the model, there is imminent hazard that it would fall to pieces by its own weight. The materials of which it must at last consist would lead to its dissolution.

An intermixture of good and evil seems immutably ordained by the Omnipotent to his creatures.

Whether the human race be radically virtuous or radically vicious, is a question yet remaining for solution: but this we are entitled to conclude, that as the evils of a savage life arise chiefly from the neglect of industry, the indulgence of propensities, and insubordination of the passions; so do the peace, the tranquillity, and happiness of the civilized condition, principally depend on the exercise of industrious habits, on refusing the solicitation, and anxiously controlling all the personal appetites and passions which mankind have received from nature.

CHAPTER V.

IS THE DESIRE OF ACQUISITION CONGENIAL TO MANKIND?

IN claiming the sovereignty of the universe, man, with the most confident complacency, assumes, that nothing exists excepting for his use, because he wishes it shall be so. With eager eyes he pursues the tenants of the air—he grasps at the inmates of the flood: both are lured by his wiles to their destruction. No sooner has he planted his foot on the soil, than he resolves to possess it without a compeer: to enjoy it unrivalled, and call it his own. His fellow species, and the beasts of the earth, are jointly expelled from what he constitutes his domain, they are reduced to subservience, brought under his dominion, or slain. He shares it only when finding himself too weak for its single occupier, or grants a tolerance to tread its surface for promoting his private comfort and convenience.

It is soon discovered that the selfishness of man alone is his study, that the means of personal gratification alone engage him, that in the first instance he has no solicitude for the pleasure of his race, that he views them just as they may contri-

bute to satisfy his inclinations or to encourage his ambition—that insatiable passion spreading over the wealth, the glory, the circumstances of worldly profit.

But contemplating the uniformity of human propensities, and comparing it with the invariable habits and the faculties of inferior creatures, leads us to important conclusions. Either the creation of subordinate matter has been intended principally for our use, or no other portion of animated existence is designed to be alike benefited by it: and thence we infer, that our privileges highly predominate over those of all other beings.

It is man alone who avails himself of his powers, by taking possession of the surface of the globe, in the proper acceptation of the word, as well as of the different objects upon it. He draws a special line of demarcation around him, which none shall be allowed to trespass: he covets what he cannot reach, he lays hold of whatever comes in his way, not merely for the sake of seizure, but for the sake of retention. Inferior creatures testify no desire for possessing what they have coveted farther than as contributing to the immediate necessities of themselves or their young in food or shelter, or from indulging in a sportive mood for the moment. The rage of the wild beast disturbed in its cavern does not correspond with the wrath of the savage against the encroachment of his fellows. Both contend for the right of pre-occupation; but the one is con-

sulting safety, while the other is jealous of participation. If arguments be advanced infringing this conclusion, they must be supported on facts resulting from deliberation, or on those which instincts operate. The brute creation certainly takes as absolute possession for the time of some restricted spot or subject as man: perhaps also the animal world, unfettered by migratory habits, avoid distant excursions from places with which they have become familiar: they have their own peculiar haunts, they know their own peculiar receptacles ready to ensure them safety; and there are scenes and places which they frequent, because agreeable to their sensations. But the materials of which the feathered songster constructs its nest never are converted to a different purpose: they are assumed to be abandoned when instinct tells they are of no further use. The simplest expedients are employed to supply the exigencies of mankind, directed by instinctive principles or reasoning in its lowest stage: and these too are often forsaken as their value ceases to be felt. With the increase of personal wants, the means of providing for them become more complex and artificial; therefore the same thing which has once proved essential is again rendered useful in another and a varied shape. Mankind alone take absolute possession of what surrounds them.

But although one has entrenched himself on that portion of the soil which he has chosen to occupy,

he cannot remain with comfort in a solitary state, or without progressive degradation. He selects a partner of the other sex, he extends his convenience by social arrangements, and harbours projects beyond the narrow sphere of domestic usurpation. Rank, fame, or conquest, those grand objects of self-interest, which entirely change the state of the person, at last engage his mind.

Yet it is not free of reluctance, that, obeying the impulse of his appetites, indulging his love of dominion, fostering his ambition for glory, or panting with the thirst of gain, he participates the benefits which he enjoys. None but the smallest share is dealt out, that too which cannot be refused, or the gift is fettered in such a manner that it may be easily reclaimed by the giver. Man seems animated by an inordinate desire for possession.

Nevertheless, were all the individuals of the human race born with identically the same propensities for acquisition, they would be involved in unceasing competitions for identically the same objects. But their views of things being so different, and the expectations of enjoyment so opposite from obtaining them, for the most part every one may pursue his purpose without the world being greatly disquieted. Thus while millions embark in enterprises, they may be carried on void of interference, and admit the preservation of the harmony of the universe.

There is no common analogy in the satisfaction

derived from the consciousness of beauty or intellectual energies, though both are allowed to rank among the most desirable qualities: the claim to distinction from birth is different from the pretensions of courage, or the merit of industry. The pleasures to be imparted by learning, the delight of possession by territorial conquest, the glory of illustrious actions, are all of peculiar gratification to him who pursues them.

But the desire of acquisition being innate to the human mind, and bestowed perhaps as a stimulus to meliorate the condition of mankind, it would be a futile property were not objects annexed to be examined, to be seized, and retained. When a prize is found it is willingly kept, or its abandonment is accompanied with regret. Happy are they who know or who are captivated only by intrinsic value! But while the soldier of Fortune is gladdened by the trumpet of Fame, for he sought no more, some sordid wretch lurks in his cavern brooding over heaps of gold. Glory is a phantom; renown is for him a barren pleasure: his cares are to keep his treasures, his fears are for their safety, his hopes are centered in amassing more. For this his days are spent in watchful toil; his nights in broken slumbers; or if he dreams, it is of lucre. Reluctant to admit the exactions of nature in himself, he is silent at the cravings of others; no milk of human kindness fills his breast; the tale of the widow, the complaints of the orphan, are grating to his ears: for

he has not a soul to melt in compassion. He feels more complacency in adding a mite to his million, though having no wants to be gratified, than the child of willing industry in relieving an aged parent, or the bountiful philanthropist in dispensing the blessings of pure benevolence. If rapine tread on the steps of ambition, and slaughter mark the progress of conquest, pale-visaged famine haunts the abode of the ruthless miser.

Is it true that "the objects of avarice and ambition differ only in their greatness;"* that it is actually the nature of mankind, the more they have to desire the more?† Ambition indeed, if we speak of a low and grovelling passion, corresponds with avarice in desiring the acquisition not of qualities, but of things. But ambition may enlarge the mind, and aim at some distinguished place in human estimation, or even in self-applause, or it may seek an illustrious name, while avarice debases in its practice. Ambition may stimulate to disinterested deeds, and spread in prodigality what it has attained through successful courage. Avarice knows not that the true and lawful end of aspiring is from the good which thereby may be done;‡ its reward is sought only from itself. Ambition may be designed a passion; avarice must be called a vice.

* *Smith*, Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part iii. Ch. 6.

† *Justin*, lib. vi. cap. 1. Lacædemonii more ingenii humani quo plura habent, eo plura cupientes.

‡ *Bacon*, Essays, § ii.

If the love of acquisition be innate in the human mind, it is long before it fixes that artificial value which is explained by the name of wealth in civilization. From its origin it is directed to what seems of immediate use; therefore those things are most prized at last, as well as in his pristine condition, which promise the highest contributions to the convenience of man. Similar principles accompany him throughout life, though he deceives himself in their exercise; for whatever estimation he may have put on gold and diamonds, both would be gladly relinquished in his extremities for a morsel of sustenance.

Habit imposes an artificial value on all those possessions for which more useful substitutes could be found. But it is chiefly after our attention is attracted to our actual store, that we begin to think seriously of its enlargement: for those who earn their daily subsistence, and have no more, seldom desire to augment or to retrench it with the direct purpose of obtaining a residue, or to convert the residue into some equivalent. Habit induces us to continue the additions which we find we have made to our treasure.

Wealth receives respect, because its concomitants commonly exhibit some of those great objects of ambition which are prized by mankind. We call the owner happy. It matters not wherein the opulence consists, whether in earth, in shells, in iron, or in gold; for it is value alone which shall

be obtained, not from the enjoyment or possession, but for the consumption on more useful exchange. "What is it you prefer?" said one to a young Albanian—"Wine?"—"No." "Pistols?"—"No." "Women?"—"No, No."—"Why," replied the young man with great frankness, "I like money best: because with that I can get all those things you mention, whenever, and as much of them as I want." *

Though no real honour be conferred by riches, a competence is enviable from the comfort which is brought along with it. In the ruder stages our demands are fewer, our feelings less acute, we are more easily satisfied, and it is then that the desires of mankind are the least directed to opulence. An artificial condition is produced by refinement and civilization. New necessities are generated, new comparisons instituted, a new race of beings seems to be created, occupying a station from which they must be dejected if competence be denied them. To preserve our possessions or better our state, the anxious industry of an entire life is devoted: for this do we contentedly labour, that subsistence may be gained for our families, and consent to unexampled temporary privations for the sake of future plenty. We toil because it is useful: Having obtained a competence we know its worth, for we

* *Hobhouse, Journey through Albania, Letter 12. vol. i. p. 140.*

know the cost that has procured it. Our personal acquisitions by labour, therefore, are usually more highly prized than what we derive from inheritance : we contemplate them as a creation of our own, one which but for us would have had no existence, and of which we have in ourselves the disposal ; and probably they are put to better use than what has been procured without trouble. “ As poets value their own poems, and parents love their children, in the same manner those who have enriched themselves value their wealth as a work of their own, as well as from the utility it affords, for which riches are valued by others.” *

We may not despise what is so essential ; but we are enabled to depreciate that wealth which many worship, from the paucity of our desires, from our wants being restricted, and our purposes easily attained. The falsest views are entertained of the actual worth of riches, as very brief reasoning could demonstrate. Competence is important, where privation of it is productive of distress, or attended with shame ; but who can affirm that the ratio of happiness enlarges with the augmentation of gold ? We are compelled to admit that its increase is no real ingredient of felicity. Is it not infinitely better on the most moderate competence to occupy ourselves with interesting pursuits, such as invigorate the mind and prove salubrious in their exercise,

* *Plato de Republica, lib. i.*

than to possess a treasure the absolute charge of which absorbs us in care? Is it not more engaging to ourselves and to the world to calculate the portion which prudence will permit us to spare in laudable distribution, than to deal out a fortune with thoughtless profusion, in the benevolent or beneficial application of which we do not take an immediate concern? Wealth is good if useful, but not otherwise: therefore in the pursuit and enjoyment of felicity, riches cannot be the good enquired after, because they are desirable not on their own account, but for the purposes which can be fulfilled from them; and they are valuable not as ends, but merely as instruments.* The exact use to which they can be appropriated indicates their exact value; they cannot be considered profitable any longer. Let us not envy those who have enormous possessions; we are misleading ourselves if we think they confer a proportional benefit, or if they add to that happiness which is not our own lot. All the surplus exceeding their necessities, and their inclination for distribution, is useless: it is quite the same as if in possession of another. The man is rich who receives more than he consumes, and he is poor whose expenditure exceeds his income.† But whoever has a store which is unapplied, with which he has no comforts to be promoted, which he does not dis-

* *Aristotle Ethic. lib. i. § 5.*

† *La Bruyere les Caracteres, tom. i. p. 256.*

tribute with a praise-worthy intention, is not more wealthy than he enjoying just a competence, whatever be his treasures. Beyond a certain portion, and that very limited, we form a most undue estimate, both of the reality and the value of wealth. Is it not evident that with a pittance comparatively, one shall become comparatively wealthy merely by restricting his wishes; and of what avail is treasure to him who is unwilling to be disturbed from the placid contemplations of a philosophical life?

Riches, says Plato, are not valuable to every man, but only to the man of worth: yet, instead of assuming that the man of worth will employ them most profitably, he seems to consider their greatest use in preserving his virtue; "for the possession of riches," he continues, "contributes considerably to abate temptation to cheat or deceive." * Possibly this eminent author infers, that the artificial condition into which mankind are brought by their union in a republic renders them needy by generating wants. The needy, doubtless, lie under many temptations, which much reserve and virtue are required to counteract; nor is it on their personal account alone, because the necessities of those in whom they feel a greater interest than in their own may provoke derelictions of the strict moral principles which a better share of worldly possessions would have preserved. The rigid legislator will not admit such

* *Plato de Republica*, lib. i. *Plutarch in vita Demetrii*.

an extenuation: but we cannot at once extirpate propensities and affections; and certain it is that the primary inducement to numerous offences is necessity, and often of that kind generated by an artificial condition.

This consideration should teach the politician, who promotes the education and raises the rank of the community, to be equally careful of promoting the means of satisfying the artificial wants which are at the same time generated. If he does not, he may be assured that in general crime will keep pace with the advancement.

The precepts of all philosophers have gone to warn the human race of the danger of covetousness, and to prove that wealth should be despised because it is no ingredient in virtue. The wisest of men, he who rejoiced that he could dispense with so many of the things exposed to his view, maintained that no benefaction can be expected from the avaricious. But we affirm that, yielding to our natural propensities, a moderate desire of acquisition is justifiable. An absolute equality of possessions is incompatible with human inclinations and the conditions supporting the fabric of society: it is adverse to a state of freedom, hostile to the improvement of time and the pursuits of industry. Bereft of property, we are debarred the exercise of generosity, the greatest privilege, the most imperious duty. The wealthiest owners, indeed, are not the readiest distributors; nor shall we deny

that those munificent contributions, for which countries, and our own of all others, may be celebrated, always originate with a few worthy individuals, under whose banners many of the multitude are reluctantly enlisted. But although wealth be not an ingredient in virtue, compassion is a grand ingredient in the disposition of man; and as it seems implanted for the special purpose of being called forth, it cannot be wrong that we shall invest ourselves in an effectual manner with the power of aiding the necessitous. Munificence is the glory of Britain; and honest industry has been its best support. From this has she contributed to sooth the sorrowing of her own children, to heal the wounds, and soften the calamities visiting distant climes.

Wealth has too great a share in the government of the world, but it is because we give it too much consequence, and ascribe too many conveniences to its presence. Were there an obvious substitute in any other means, did any of the virtues, for example, operate by their influence the same advantages proposed, did they command the same respect, we should no longer have to reproach the omnipotence of riches. Mankind, however, are not alike vulnerable by excellence; the benefit of wealth easily strikes home to the senses: the patriarchs had their treasures in equivalents to gold: in every successive age the same admiration is expressed of opulence.* No af-

* *Salvianus* de Gubernatione Dei, lib. iii. speaks in the fifth

fairs of magnitude can be conducted without riches, in whatever shape they be employed ; therefore they are productive of consequences so indirect, as to prohibit the spectator from referring to the real causes. Some of the happiest institutions for improving the mind to virtue, and restoring the body to health, have sprung from benevolent opulence, and have flourished from the alliance of gracious sympathy with riches. Empire over territory is empire over men : but wealth may pave the way to conquest as effectually as steel, and spare the effusion of human blood. Perseus “was not descended from any Lydian or Phenician merchant, but allied to Alexander and Philip, whose maxim it was to procure empire with money and not money with empire, and who, by pursuing that maxim, conquered the world : for it was a common saying that it was not Philip, but Philip’s gold, that took the cities of Greece.”* But it does not require the penetration of great judges of human nature to discover the covetous disposition of men, to prove that nothing is so acceptable as gifts and successions ; that selfishness enlarges their insatiable appetites to hunger after more. Nay, do not we know that their envy of the fortune of others is best appeased by something corresponding bestowed on themselves ? With what a jealous eye

century of the debasement of his time in valuing the wealthy, just as we do at present. *Maxima Bibliotheca Patrum*, tom. viii. p. 451.

* *Plutarch in vita Pauli Æmilii.*

do they behold those sudden and capricious largesses of the blind goddess to her hardy votaries, artfully proclaimed to augment their number, and inviting them to taste of similar dispensations! With what avidity and mingled regret do they listen to the reckoning of those residuary treasures, which one who seems to have outlived his race is compelled to leave behind him! Is it ought but mere avarice that induces persons who have more than they can use still to add heaps to their gold; who extend their estates, over which their now feeble limbs refuse to bear them? Far from believing that they have already too much in superfluity, it appears that mankind seldom think they have got enough: "The more they have, the more they desire." Do they ever begin to keep until a present store seems worthy of enlargement? Does any one set out from nothing with the direct purpose of accumulation?—But avarice grows with indulgence: and the avaricious accumulate solely from the love of accumulation; neither for the purpose of opening their coffers, nor of allowing others to enjoy what is useless to themselves. They are unconcerned about the necessities which it would cost them nothing to relieve; they conclude, that none have nearly such occasion as they have for wealth. Nicephorus commanded a merchant to bring him his whole fortune, which proved to be one hundred pounds of gold. "You have no use for so much," said the Emperor, and returning him ten pounds,

kept ninety to himself. * Among ourselves let us look to the heir who inherits all his father's wealth. How numerous are his own necessities, how few does he conceive those to be of his dependent family, all standing in the same relation to the departed, and all served so lately out of the common store !

Riches being the medium of obtaining benefits, they are obviously useless in so far as unemployed: and the converse of the proposition is true, that they can be useful only when they are employed. But ceasing to consider wealth as the medium of obtaining benefits, leads to corruption ; and admits of the empire of avarice, one of the most odious and inveterate vices. Engrafting itself on the soul, it expels the brightest virtues, and especially that gentle quality which moulds the heart to compassion : teaching that all things are venal, it subverts happy dispositions, truth and probity, and substitutes perfidy or cruelty in their place. †

But no such evils are necessarily concomitant on wealth : the love of acquisition neither is injurious nor reprehensible, if converted to a proper purpose.

* *Historiæ Miscellæ*, lib. xxiv. *Zonaras*, *Annales*, lib. xv. cap. 14. This avaricious monarch died in the first years of the ninth century. His whole wealth was distributed in a few days by his successor, among the nobles, senators, monks, and poor.

† *Sallust* *Bellum Catilinarium*, cap. vi. *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xxi. § 1. lib. xxii. § 20. tom. ii. p. 489, 494.

When not employed, its purpose is not fulfilled : for riches being the representative of objects useful in themselves, accumulation for the sake of possession is pouring the fertilizing stream of intended good into a darksome pit to be withdrawn from mankind, ever hidden from view, nor returned until it can be kept no longer.

The wealthy covet wealth, the powerful extort from the strong, the strong oppress the weak to come at their humble stores, the artful plot deception on the unsuspecting to profit by their simplicity, and the wicked commit disgraceful crimes to satiate their thirst for gold. It would not be so were mankind willing to be satisfied with what they could obviously turn to use : were they as ready to restrict their wants as to enlarge them and to offer a wrong. The gifts of nature are great : the produce of the earth is ample, our utmost necessities are anticipated in still more copious resources. Yet all are despised : we languish for something which is not ours : we are never sated. The constant prayer of mortals is for wealth, as if riches could restore from sickness, or heal a troubled spirit. We forget that they are desirable only where they are to be employed. But we discover that they prove substitutes for what we wish, that they are convertible benefits : that they can bestow and that they can command : that if their owner borrows from himself, it is the same as if he took from his neighbours : that wealth is a universal leveller.

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Avarice is a stranger to justice, an enemy to peace, a friend to evil, it has no equity in its dealings. "There is a great outcry about money," says Seneca, "it involves parents and children, it prepares poison, arms executioners, and soldiers also,—it is besmeared with our blood. From avarice does the intercourse of spouses resound with contention, and multitudes fill the tribunals—from avarice do monarchs rage, plunder and overturn states established for ages, that from the ashes of their cities they may search out treasure." *

Aware of the invincible empire of avarice over man, the wise and the virtuous have anxiously taught the danger of yielding to its temptations. They have shewn that the absence of wealth does not impair content, that its presence does not ensure happiness, that its pursuit may lead to frightful excesses; that the needy may be envied by the opulent. Glancing around us, we behold one apparently downcast with the look of care, another with a cheerful countenance, and a third smiling with a kind of complacent indifference on the things of the world. A stranger will conclude that the first is sinking under adversity, that the second enjoys abundance, that the third is regardless of the incidents of to-morrow. To us who know the truth he errs; for the care worn man is borne down by the weight of his wealth; content makes his companion

* *Seneca de Ira*, cap. 32.

cheerful, though having comparatively none; and the third is a philosopher, who, completely satisfied with the arrangements of the universe, accepts of all for the best, admiring the real equalization of felicity among mankind. The wise and virtuous judge rightly that men allow their wealth to take possession of them; that they become its slaves when ceasing to employ it in promoting their comfort.

Were promptitude of distribution concomitant on successful accumulation, avarice would be a virtue: but it is the vice of the avaricious that they cannot resolve to separate themselves from their gold; they cannot bestow the meanest portion of their barren treasure. They forget that riches are not the ends but the instruments.

In the outset of life, when patient industry calls for exertion, we are willing to earn the bread of honest labour: we are gladdened with the public notice, with opportunities of obtaining favour and distinction, and with being allowed to gain reputation. As we advance, a period more distant opens to our prospect, when the fruits of our toil shall enable us to lessen it, and admit our enjoyment of that domestic leisure which in retirement is visibly so gratifying to our neighbours. Time never seems tedious to the contented. Spite of enviable occupation and patronage, however, some will not agree to wait so long: impatience outstrips

the tardier pace of prudence, and renders their sober progress irksome ; they would run the race by leaps ; they will rather venture than delay ; and they often hurry into danger.

Profit is fair in traffic : formerly the merchant, actuated by an honest reserve, studied how low he could reduce it with safety to himself :—Who is now content without the utmost stretch for gain ? Unless by cautiously contracting beforehand, we dare not consume : else imposture visits our heedlessness, and we cannot hope to shun extortion for taking in good faith what we prove unable to restore. Avarice predominates most where there are the greater openings for its exercise : an unmerciful advantage is reaped from our necessities : opportunity tempts the sinner, and finding its sweets he sins again.

The parsimony of our ancestors allows us to be prodigal ; but we rather incline to add to their stores. Were avarice promoted by traffic, and wealth to result from industry, Britain should be at once the most opulent and the most avaricious of nations. Doubtless parsimony has created treasures, and many refuse to admit of their smallest diminution ; but commercial intercourse among the more liberal seems rather to enlarge the mind, and many are profusely generous. The merchant often holds forth a noble example to those, even men of elevated rank, whose coffers overflow from the public purse, who, rewarded for services they never performed, are yet rap-

cious for more. His munificence shews a worthy pattern to those avaricious families, who, root and branch, believing themselves engrafted on the Treasury, seize with the one hand, like so many public plunderers, and keep the other open.

“A life of money-making, which is plainly a state of toil and trouble,”* is quite consistent in those who cannot dispense with it: but the noble is mean who descends to share in speculative adventure for the sake of gain, and the peasant is noble who, content with the fruits of his industry, still offers something to the needy. Intellectual excellence is purified in proportion as it abandons grovelling desires: and it is from the qualities of the high that a profitable example is afforded to the low. The more exalted the rank of individuals therefore, the more inexcusable the needless covetousness taking possession of them: “Avarice is the worst vice of a sovereign,” says the philosophic Antoninus.† At this day the British are the most generous race of men: not only are they always eager to assist each other, but, from the pleasure of benevolence, they search out the necessitous. Nevertheless the great, it cannot be denied, seem to find a charm, which was unknown to their ancestors, in augmenting opulence; if not seduced by avarice, sometimes they seem anxious to benefit by traffic.

* *Aristotle Ethic. lib. i. § 5.*

† *Valerius Gallicanus in vita Avidii Cassii, § 8.*

Diodorus reproaches the Romans as the most avaricious of contemporary mankind, though he exempts their predecessors from the charge of covetousness.* The age of avarice, known by every nation, is promoted by vanity and luxury, desiring ostentation and indulgence; and inspiring, along with artificial wants, a thirst for the means of satisfying them. Acquisition becomes a necessity, for the sake of distribution, to obtain something in another form.

We call ourselves a generous nation : we are so, that is, there is a multitude of the good among us. Nevertheless, the multitude is still greater of those whose cupidity is insatiably active for benefiting itself at the expense of their fellows. There is even a vast multitude who, without giving any thing in exchange, in which they may practise imposture, yet speculate on the extortion which they may practise under the name of "indemnification for trouble." There is not a more insidious pretext, one to which so much colour is given, or which is more speciously abused in Britain. Thousands urgently interfere in the affairs of their neighbours, which would flourish without them; and then, as if to save them from ruin, they bring their unlucky dupes still nearer the brink of the precipice, or entangle them still deeper in the quick-

* This author lived a short time preceding the Christian æra, as he alludes to his being a contemporary of Julius Cæsar.

sands, by exacting a salvage from the wreck "for trouble." Profits are fair from traffic ; less or more is given in exchange. Mankind are bound, as far as it is prudent, to give mutual assistance, were it only from charity: but when he who having his hand in his neighbour's purse begins to talk of trouble, the owner needs no longer balance its contents against the gripe of cupidity. It does not depend on him how much he shall continue to call his own. Flagrant instances might be given ; but still more flagrant is it to sanction that system of pillage from the defenceless, which results from a criminal disregard of duty by the superintendants of public affairs, especially in various judicial departments.

Under all the inconveniences, however, of which the warmest lovers of integrity can complain in Britain, they never cease to hope for justice, unattainable in other countries. They have some security against private extortions ; and if they must submit to exactions nominally of state necessity, all are compelled to purchase protection on the self same terms along with them. None are in danger from public, many may dread private rapacity. But we must look back to antiquity, or to the present condition of foreign nations, if we would know the boundless thirst for gold, and the inventive cruelty of avarice. We must cast an eye on the history of the Romans at the siege of Jerusalem, or the persecution of the Jews of old in England, on the iniquities of the Spaniards in Mexico, or Turkish despotism in modern Greece. By this

we shall learn the excesses to which mankind can be impelled by cupidity: that to shun the avaricious, the rich rejoice in calling themselves poor; and the poor are glad to be thought still poorer: that gold is extracted by torments; and if the wealthy can withstand their own personal sufferings, that their wives and families must also endure pain and insult to come at the secret store. * Avarice has refused life to the living, and inhumation to the dead: it has purchased captives for preservation, and it has likewise doomed them to be slain. †—The city of Jerusalem was reduced to incredible extremities during the siege of Titus in the first century. The pressure of famine urged the citizens to escape from within, while inevitable danger from without compelled them to remain: the Romans were fired by implacable hatred against them, and were cruel where they might have been merciful, from contempt of their race. Their allies were still more barbarous. Many, overcome by their sufferings in the city, ventured to hope for alleviation in leaving it; for man-

* *Macmichael*, Journey from Moscow to Constantinople, p. 109.

† The cemetery of the monastic establishments in Britain was anciently apportioned among the canons, that each might obtain certain profits from interment of the parishioners. But exactions for the privilege of interment in consecrated ground were so excessive in Paris during the fifteenth century, that some of the greatest cemeteries were a considerable time inaccessible; and in the year 1513, Parliament interfered to correct the abuse: *St Foix Essais Historiques*, tom. i. p. 54.

kind strive to fly from their calamities. Much gold, according to Josephus, was at that time in Jerusalem, which the owners, on making their escape, swallowed for preservation. But the watchfulness of avarice knows no repose. As these unfortunate beings forsook their comrades, the fact of their carrying clandestine treasure was discovered "in one instance, and the fame of it filled their several camps that the deserters came to them full of gold. So the multitude of the Arabians, with the Syrians, cut up those that came as suppliants, and searched their bellies; nor does it seem to me," says Josephus, "that any misery befel the Jews that was more terrible than this, since in one night's time about 2000 of those deserters were thus dissected." Titus threatened his own soldiers with condign punishment for such cruelty; but the historian remarks, that no passion is more venturesome than covetousness; and that "the love of money was too hard for all their dread of punishment. The merciless barbarians, when not in sight of any Roman, would still destroy the wretched fugitives, in the expectation of finding gold in their bowels; and a great many were thus destroyed in the bare hope of getting by them." *

The greediness of avarice is always inventive: always it contrives to gain from every source, and

* *Josephus Bellum Judaicum*, lib. v. cap. 13. § 4, 5. *Tacitus Historiæ*, lib. v. cap. 31.

spares nothing for the sake of profit : it always attacks the most defenceless. King John imposed a subsidy on the Jews in England, but a certain individual at Bristol resolutely refused compliance, notwithstanding the extortioner had called in the aid of torture to obtain ten thousand marks of silver. At length he commanded one of his great teeth to be drawn daily. During seven days the man obdurately submitted to the penalty, " but on the eighth he was glad to redeem himself, on preparations for its renewal, by paying the money, and saving his only tooth remaining."* It is alleged of his successor Henry VII. that he was so avaricious that he preferred riches to reputation, and thought of nothing so much as how he might acquire them : " Of nature assuredly," says Bacon, " he coveted to accumulate treasure : " he is even accused of having commuted punishments for the purchase of indemnity : and " the less blood he drew, the more he took of treasure."† The contrivance of allowing men to ransom their persons from slavery, and redeem their lives from death, is no new invention ; nor will it ever grow old. It is a ready instrument, which is delivered over into the hands of the powerful and despotic, along with the prisoner, the subject, or the slave. A modern traveller relates, that the present King of Persia's horse be-

* *Matthæus Paris Historia Major*, p. 192.

† *Bacon, History of the Reign of King Henry VII. in fine.*

ing startled by a salute from the military, and throwing him to the ground, the indignant despot immediately commanded all the innocent men to be destroyed. But after about twenty-five had suffered, the survivors implored his pardon, which they were willing to obtain by a fine. The condition was accepted, the avaricious monarch regretting that he had been so precipitate with the rest, as their contributions would have been of greater service to him than their death.*

Nicephorus despoiled the Byzantine merchant, presuming he had no occasion for wealth; and so do the covetous take from others to enjoy their possessions, or relieve themselves. Henry III. of England despoiled his subjects, but he defended himself on the plea of necessity: and if the exactions to which even the opulent are exposed be considered, there can often be only the scantiest residue of treasures apparently inexhaustible. “No wonder I want money,” said Henry to the Jews; “it is frightful to look at the amount of my debts: I am craved on all hands.—Stripped of my possessions, I am myself impoverished: my son costs me more than fifteen thousand marks a year. Therefore I must have money for my living from any quarter, from any hand, and by whatever means it may be got.” †

* *Johnson*, Journey from India to England in 1817, p. 101.

† *Matthæus Paris* *Historia Major*, p. 776. The author's complaints of this king's exactions are numerous.

Amidst the features distinguishing national character it is affirmed, that there are at present entire countries or tribes, as those of western Africa, which have never yet been infected by grovelling avarice, and where misers are still unknown.* On the other hand, there are tribes invariably denoted, as the Jews, by their covetousness, in whatever age or in whatever part of the globe they have lived. They carry this characteristic inseparably along with them : no doubt exaggerated, and perhaps arising from their more industrious habits, which taught their neighbours how to prey upon them, or otherwise take advantage of their wealth. Oppressions debase the oppressed; the worst is readily believed of those sunk in public estimation, which would be scorned as a fiction of the reputable. During the retreat of the French army from Moscow in the year 1812, a contract was made with the Jews to clear the city of Wilna left full of the dead, on condition of receiving a certain price for each of the pestilential bodies removed. The contract was faithfully performed; but not content with the emoluments to be derived from the dead, they are charged with having been “ detected throwing the dying out at the windows of the hospitals, to swell the amount of their claims.”† Avarice is equally cruel and crafty. But if slavery be a lesser evil

* *Golberry* *Fragmens d'un Voyage*, tom. ii. p. 435. *Proyart* *Histoire de Loango et autres Royaumes d'Afrique*, p. 72.

† *Macmichael*, *Journey from Moscow*, p. 26.

than death, we can easily comprehend how the iniquitous rapacity of mankind may be so directed as to diminish the miseries of war. Avarice, in itself unmerciful, may thus become the fountain of mercy. Yet the modern Jews at Wilna were as barbarous to the helpless meriting their compassion, as the ancient enemies of their tribe to the captives at Jerusalem.

If the objects of the universe be created for man, he may use them : if we are naturally selfish, it is because a certain rate of selfishness is essential to our benefit. But this rate of selfishness cannot be designed to extend to the acquisition of what is superfluous, as it then ceases to be useful. It becomes a vice, and there is none by which we are more frequently dishonoured in civilized society than by needless avarice. Parsimony, meanness, falsehood, injustice, are all to be numbered in its offspring. The sense of delicacy, the blush of shame, meekness and humanity, are banished by the love of gain. Men are not restricted to selling others, they actually sell themselves for gold. Whence is that frugal œconomy which would enrich itself by withdrawing every successive indulgence from ourselves or our dependents : whence those stratagems to overreach our neighbours, and dupe them into credulity, but for the purpose of personal profit, or some unfair advantage. Whence are those clandestine promises and engagements which men are afraid should come to light, or the wincing to evade their yoke

if they do, but from avarice. Why is the statesman so chary of his patronage until feeling his way whether he can balance his expectations of returned profit, but from the dread of giving something for nothing? Whence is all the cunning of the artful, which in their dealings puts our patience to the test, or from pretended necessity hurries us into precipitate acquiescence with their measures, but for their own lucre? And why that hypocritical simplicity and affected ignorance of what is known to all the world, but to deceive the watchfulness of the vigilant, and prey on their slumbering prudence?

There are a thousand avenues to the heart of the avaricious. Channels the most indirect and imperceptible, the most complex, winding and disguised, are always open, or lie in ready ambush to receive the grateful stream, and convey its warmth to selfishness.

How few of mankind comparatively have integrity to spurn the proffered gold, and resist its fascinations! Its very aspect illumines their sullen features: their eyes glisten with delight as they devour the resplendent mass of corruption. Harpalus knew to distinguish a man's passion for gold by his pleasure at its sight, and the keen looks he cast upon it: and having remarked the surprise of Demosthenes at the sight of a golden cup, he sent it to him with twenty talents. "Demosthenes could not resist the temptation: it made all the impression on him that was expected: he received the money like a

garrison into his house, and went over to the interest of Harpalus." * The boldest proffers may be made to the covetous if propped on gold, without hazarding ourselves in their estimation, or exposing ourselves to their resentment: When is the door closed upon the giver: when do we forbid him to return?—Moralists and soldiers may debate whether it be better to win cities with blood or treasure.

Exchange of goods or labour on equitable grounds, is as laudable for a beneficial purpose as acquisitions are criminal when the source is impure. Mankind have impiously feigned disease to excite sympathy; they have robbed parents of their children to hold them as pledges for the compassion of strangers; they have been the venal propagators of calumny; they have bartered for their artifice in ensnaring female virtue; they have insidiously vended poisons to corrupt the pure imagination of youthful innocence. † Panders to the vices of the great have been rewarded with—but let us drop the curtain, lest, in just indignation at the preferment of the unworthy, we be provoked to reveal licentiousness.

* *Plutarch* in vita Demosthenis. Some authors incline to deny this imputation on the Athenian orator.

† *Medland and Weobly*, Remarkable Trials, vol. i. p. 117. A foreigner introduced himself, by surreptitious pretences, into creditable seminaries of youthful females, for the purpose of selling obscene prints and drawings. He was sentenced to the pillory on the 19th of February 1803.

Avarice thus assumes a thousand shapes and multifarious contrivances. Do not we sometimes behold health and sickness, vigour and infirmity, youth and decrepitude, bound by it in indissoluble union? Thus does the prodigal endeavour to repair his shattered fortune, or launch into new profusion; and so does the needy adventurer strive to lure his prize into the net, spread with apparent candour, and as if for any advantage but his own. The prospects of profit seem to hide deformity, to varnish vice, to change a monster to excellence, and fill the idiot mind with understanding. Such is our sympathetic avarice, that we hasten to greet the man as prudent who plants his foot on worldly treasure, and most complacently welcome the good he has gained, though having allied himself to secret misery. How often does the expediency of sharing another's possessions by a wealthy union, flit in the fancy of those who have set their soul on money! Depraved opinions tell, that he is not alike prudent, who, yielding to the fervour of pliant nature, allows the charms of grace and beauty to reach his heart, as he who takes a caveat against the softer emotions to elevate himself on a golden independence. In this, the most important transaction of human life, censure rather will meet the one for weakly following an impulse, while the other will be commended for sagaciously stepping beyond the caprices of giddy fortune.—Against the qualities ascribed to wealth, surely there are certain

detrimental compensations to be weighed: there are limits whereby to restrict mercenary maxims, shewing that nothing is profitable unless it be useful; and that evils may accompany acquisition more than counterbalancing all our visionary schemes of expected enjoyment. If our condition be not intolerable, we may submit to it: we are not any worse by abstaining from a dangerous adventure; and our contemplations usually are directed more to ideal than to real advantage.

Can we conceive any thing more shocking and disgusting, than that the absolute thirst of lucre should induce a man to unite himself for life to a creature scarcely endowed with the human form, and precisely for the same purpose as he would purchase a wild beast shut up in a cage? The union of dwarfs and giants is less incredible. A miserably disfigured creature, Barbara Urslerin, was born in the year 1622: her face was covered up to the eyes with long loose flowing hair, from which she derived no imperfect resemblance to a monkey. She was so unlike the rest of her race, that a man named Michael Van Beck actually married her with the design of earning a livelihood by exhibiting her person as a show. From the year 1651 she was seen in London and elsewhere; and expressive engravings, executed by eminent artists of the day, remain to prove the empire of covetousness, in testifying how hideous an object this must have been; though

perhaps some accomplishments palliated her external deformity. *

In this manner does avarice adopt an infinity of different aspects, and hopes to escape detection through inimitable disguises : It is always pleading and putting forth its petition in many forms. But the more its claims are listened to, the more rapacious it becomes. At first soliciting, at length it insists : then it commands, exacts, and tyrannizes even to the destruction of the innocent owner of the little store coveted by the miser. But besides rendering mankind wicked, it makes them ridiculous. Our avarice and our vanity are at variance. We would be great and important personages—illuminated by splendour from dying tapers—starving our families to offer a feast.

Instead of a reasonable desire for competence, we indulge an insatiable thirst for wealth. But what are we justly to consider either wealth or competence? Surely those possessions which provide our comfortable subsistence, which preserve us from falling from the station that we occupy, are enough. Having more, we are rich. Though the cravings of avarice are never to be sated, and we are greedy of acquisition on purpose that acquisition shall be profitable by quitting it, the true definition of riches

* *Granger*, Biographical History of England, vol. ii. p. 107. vol. iii. p. 497. *Woodburne*, Gallery of British Portraits, vol. ii. In different prints she is seen inactive, or playing on the harpsichord or organ.

is having something residuary over our own necessities, which may be given away. He who, expending treasures, leaves any one to say he cannot get his own, is rather prodigal than wealthy, so long as unable to pay what he owes. It is most absurd to envy the magnitude of human possessions while ignorant of the real wants of the owner, if the means of satisfying them be the only genuine test of riches. The man who in our eyes is indigent, may actually enjoy independence, if his pittance, however narrow, can still compensate his necessities ; and he is not indigent if he has any thing to spare. The man of external opulence is needy if disconcerted by a claim against which he could not provide. After the reasonable satisfaction of our real necessities we become independent ; and what exceeds independence is the foundation of wealth. Thus there can be no doubt that “ he who receives more than he consumes is rich.”

Wherefore then do mankind languish so anxiously after the goods of the world ! How are we so unaccountably deluded as to desire that from which we cannot reap any true enjoyment ! It seems indeed as if avarice were certainly inspired by nature ; and that we are incapable of delivering ourselves from its chains.

We plead generosity, we say that we wish nothing except our own, or what may become so justifiably by industry, frugality, or innocent acquisitions, and without injuring others. Nicephorus took from

the Byzantine merchant what he deemed a useless superfluity. But covetousness is so congenial to the sentiments of man, that it would prove very difficult to persuade the vanquished that their invader is animated less by thirst for gold than thirst for glory. The peaceful, who do not intermeddle with their neighbours, cannot comprehend how disturbance of their tranquillity accompanied by pillage, can be merely for renown.

It is preserved by some Eastern tradition, that during the brilliant progress of the Macedonian hero, he reached the city of Derbend, on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Having disguised himself as his own ambassador, he repaired to a certain widowed Sultana, demanding the surrender of her territory; and she invited him to an entertainment on the following day in the city. The Sultana being a woman of taste and curiosity, had previously obtained his picture, from which she immediately recognized the original on the first interview. Alexander arriving at the time appointed, was introduced to a spacious hall, containing a table covered with treasure, and the Sultana's jewels in dishes of gold. She earnestly pressed him to eat, at which Alexander testified much surprize, asking the Princess if her table afforded no other victuals, for what was before him was not calculated to allay his hunger:—to which the Sultana replied, “I thought, O Alexander, that you could live on nothing else, since, for the sake of riches, you have laid so many

countries waste, and left the poor inhabitants to die of want. Now behold, if you had all the treasure this world affords, without provisions you must perish." Then ordering a curtain which concealed his picture to be drawn aside, she discovered from what it was she knew him. But, continues the tradition, the monarch was so charmed with her admirable prudence and conduct, that refusing to accept her proffered gifts, he requested her portrait only.

This seasonable reproof affords a salutary lesson of the unprofitable quality of wealth, unless as a medium for promoting convenience. The parsimonious are the first to deny themselves the comforts of life, they even refuse to assuage its craving necessities, and some are said to have allowed themselves to perish of want amidst profusion. They actually become enamoured of their useless hoard : and we read of one, whose circumstances being rendered desperate, loaded a vessel, wherein he might sink along with his treasures, and thus escape his pursuers, as covetous as himself. In proportion as our possessions augment, we should pray that an enlarging liberality shall keep pace with them : nor ought we to deceive ourselves in the belief that all worldly joys concentrate in riches.

Parsimony is rather the child than the parent of avarice : but without critically resolving their relationship, they are so nearly of a kind as to degenerate into each other, or blend in one. None dis-

tinguished by parsimony will escape the reproach of covetousness. But thus far they differ, that while the avaricious insatiably grasp at more than they have, the parsimonious anxiously repress their natural cravings, and contract their voluntary distributions. They are more than frugal. They study how little may serve, not how much may be enjoyed.—Unlike the prodigal who never thinks of to-morrow, the parsimonious are as sparing as if they had made a covenant for eternal life. We do not account parsimony so reprehensible, however, among our forefathers as among ourselves; for we are very willing to forget their imperfections, provided they have contributed to our enjoyments. If the spendthrift heir has patience to endure his stinted stipend, he will have no reason to complain of his ancestor in the end. It is unjust indeed to measure the means of human gratification, wisely made so various, exactly by our own desires; for it is that variety which admits of so many being supplied. Do not we thoughtlessly cast aside, as useless to ourselves, what is esteemed precious by numbers of the needy? Iron is intrinsically more valuable than gold. The prodigal wastes every thing in his profusion: the frugal are sparing: the parsimonious niggardly. “The emperor Severus was so œconomical of his clothes, that scarcely any purple remained in his tunic, and he covered his shoulders with a shaggy cloak. He was excessively moderate in diet, fond of the pulse of his native country,

frequently abstaining from flesh, but indulging copiously in wine.”* Severus was only frugal.

No condition in life exempts from the infection of odious avarice, or the meanness of parsimony ; for the one being a craving for something more, is as an irregularly voracious appetite ; and the other resembles the powers of mechanical compression, which is augmented so long as the machine can bear it by force and resistance. Also like vicious personal conformation or mental imbecility, either seems transmissible by inheritance.—There may be successive generations of misers. Sir Harvey Elwes, of Stoke, in the county of Suffolk, by living during 60 years in solitude, by shunning the world and its concomitant expenses, by wearing the cast-off clothes of his predecessor, retrenching his own fare, and refusing himself the use of fire and candle, amassed a fortune of £250,000. He had a sister who, although left £100,000 by her husband for subsistence, literally starved herself to death. The treasures of both devolved to her son, whose parsimony rendered him yet more remarkable than either. He accustomed himself to abstinence, that he might evade the charges of maintenance when from home ; and on a journey sat down under a hedge to refresh his horse with a few blades of grass, and himself from the scantiest provision which he had carried along with him. Like his predecessor Sir Harvey, he wore the clothes of those

* *Ælius Spartianus in vita Severi*, § 19.

who had gone before him ; and when his last coat was done, he refused to replace it, but accepted one from a neighbour. He was so saving of fuel, that he took advantage of the industry of the crows in pulling down their nests: and if any friend accidentally living with him were absent, he would carefully put out his fire and walk to a neighbour's house, in order that the same chimney might give out warmth to both. At one time this singular character frequented the fashionable world even during his parsimonious habits, and would support the credit of his gambling friends by advancing largely for their stakes, at the same hour that he would wrangle for the value of farthings. He sat many years in parliament, where he voted conscientiously, asking no favours, and desiring neither rank nor emolument. His obligations were most punctually discharged, he often acted liberally towards others, nor did he ever fail where his word had bound him ; but in what regarded himself, he and parsimony were inseparable: he became apprehensive that he should die in want; and never committing any of his transactions to writing, he remained in complete ignorance as to the extent of his wealth. Sometimes hiding his gold in small parcels in different parts of his house, he would anxiously visit the spot to ascertain whether each remained as he had left it: arising from bed, he would hasten to his bureau to examine if its contents were in safety. In later life, no other sentiment occupied his mind: at midnight he has been

heard as if struggling with assailants, and crying out in agitation, "I will keep my money,—I will; nobody shall rob me of my property!" though no one was near to disturb him in its possession. At length this remarkable person died in the year 1789, aged nearly eighty, and worth nearly a million. Amidst his vices he was endowed with virtues; and "his avarice consisted not in hard-heartedness, but in self-denial." *

While the mind may be thus contracted by parsimony, and debased by avarice, let us remember that some men are absolutely indifferent to wealth. Blessed with content for the competence they enjoy, conscious that mere enlargement of fortune does not in reality make them richer, the trappings of dignity, the tinsel of splendour, affected state and consequence, cannot dazzle their eyes, or seduce them from placid retirement. They know that there are a thousand things surrounding us for which we have no occasion, which we cannot convert to use, and of which the simple possession would prove an intolerable incumbrance: that so it is with gold to those by whom it is not coveted. Nor can it be otherwise; for what is the lustre of the finest gem, if we are ignorant of this being its quality? The most ample gifts would be so much punishment, if compelling us to abandon a rational course of life merely to take charge of them lest they perish;—and it would

* *Topham*, Life of Elwes.—Some incidents exactly corresponding are related of another miser by *Brantôme*, Œuvres, tom. iii. p. 511.

be better that accumulations, when oppressive, were taken away, if it would leave us some leisure for the profitable occupation of time, or the prosecution of our favourite study. There have been men who philosophically ascribed their own preservation to the deperdition of their wealth, to whom proffered donations were not acceptable. "Epaminondas had but a single cloak, and that a bad one. On giving it to the fuller, he remained at home for want of another; yet when the King of Persia sent him much wealth, he would receive none of it." Crates renounced his fortune, and cast it into the sea: and the servant of Aristippus complaining of the weight of his money, he desired him to throw away what was inconvenient, and carry as much as he was able. The father of Democritus possessed such wealth, that he could afford to entertain the Persian army; but Democritus himself resigning almost the whole to his country, retained only a small portion, and devoting his life to study, dwelt unknown in the city of Athens.*

Wealth is not absolutely the bane of learning: Yet its aspect seems almost to have affrightened the Muses; for most of those great works which promise to survive the wreck of time, never acknowledged its importance, nor sprung from under its protection. Let not the true philosopher therefore

* *Ælian Variæ Historiæ*, lib. v. cap. 6. *Diogenes Laertius* in vita Aristippi. *Valerius Maximus*, lib. viii. cap. 7, de Studio et Industria.

be discouraged because his artificial wants are repressed by niggard fortune: indulgence might impair, if it did not alienate his mind from knowledge and virtue.

Although many of those the most reputable for integrity have been the least regardful of wealth, the contempt of riches may be too highly extolled: the dereliction of property may be overdone. There is as little real virtue in poverty as in riches. Parsimony and profusion are equally reprehensible. In the darker ages, a kind of religious delirium introduced vows of poverty and penance: people stripped themselves of their possessions, clothed themselves in rags, wandered in idleness, and scourged their bodies unmercifully, believing that they had thus hit on the high road to heaven. But professions of poverty being adverse to human propensities, could only spread disorder in human affairs; and all excesses soon display their own absurdity. The devout founded institutions for maintaining those who confided in the public liberality for subsistence, or who were entitled to enter an order by forsaking their estates. From the applause bestowed on poverty, a swarm of rapacious mendicants arose to infest every fertile territory of Christendom, so clamorous in pretension, so bold in exaction, that few durst answer by denial; and the magnificent asylums provided for their reception, at last degenerated into receptacles for indolence and licentiousness, as the observance of their salutary regulations declined.

Our real wants are easily satisfied : our artificial wants are insatiable. Plato has justly said, that to become truly happy one should not study to enlarge his estate, but to contract his desires :—thence a very moderate portion of the goods of the world may suffice ; nor should the most ardent thirst for riches ever exceed what may be laudably obtained, and suitably and cheerfully distributed. The more we are absorbed in mental abstraction, and the more we are engaged in agreeable and interesting occupations, the less are we assailed by cravings for wealth. The brightest intellectual embellishments have adorned the needy philosopher : the sphere of human knowledge has been the most gloriously blazoned where bleak penury found the mind impregnable to avarice and luxury.

It is a remarkable trait of female excellence, that nowhere throughout the universe are women so avaricious as men, while they incomparably testify themselves more generous : nor would it be difficult perhaps to offer some reasons for this amiable difference of character.

Ambition being a passion congenial to the soul, man, by his superior intellect and organization, is enabled to take possession of the world. The formation of useful objects reciprocating with those inclinations which are united with the privileged endowment of power, afford the strongest presumptions that one of the ends of creation has actually been on his account. Yet in the lower, the intermediate, and

even in the most refined stages, a vileness in his nature breaks forth, to be corrected only by education, to be forsaken or modified by renouncing his warmest propensities. He abuses his strength; for he usurps dominion over his weaker helpmate, where only entitled to equality. Thirsting for conquest, he becomes a cruel invader; and spurning at justice, despoils the defenceless, or tramples on the rights of humanity. If, in the exaltation of his mind, he seeks after honour and reputation on their own account, and is jealous of glory to illustrate a lofty name, no rival is admitted to share his laurels. But in the debasement of his soul he stoops to avarice, grows greedy of gold, and grovels in parsimony.

CHAPTER VI.

DECEIT IS UNNATURAL.

THE beautiful simplicity of nature presents only a single aspect, though matter may be disguised by a thousand different colours, and multiplied into infinite forms and proportions. But its lucid veil is imbued with artificial darkness ; it is loaded, borne down, and oppressed by the deep occultations of falsehood. Man of himself, from inherent imperfections, labours under fallacies so numerous, as to confound observation, experiment, and reasoning, in endless perplexity. Attempting to analyse the objects before him, he is opposed by nameless difficulties ; if he endeavour to penetrate the principles of immateriality, he is repulsed at every step. It surpasses his utmost ability to comprehend the combination of the physical and intellectual properties of his own system. His senses are continually imposing on his judgment ; and he has to contend with mental prejudices, which are leading his senses astray. The solicitation and seduction of his passions rise in tumultuous array to disturb the placidity of temperate deliberation. He is plunged amidst a troubled sea. He recurs to the records of ages gone by ; those who occupied them were not more favoured : the

simple lapse of time is of itself productive of error, against which there is no protection ; the frauds of antiquity accumulate on the willing deceptions of modern artifice to bewilder investigation ; and at length we are abandoned more to the exercise of discretion in our credulity, than to the aid of undoubted testimony. “ Proud as man may be of his intelligence and his reasoning powers, from infancy to manhood, from manhood to old age and decrepitude, he has no choice, no alternative, but to walk as much by his faith as by his sight.” *

But truth is antecedent to falsehood : for truth is nature, and falsehood is art, which must ever be dependent on and subordinate to nature.

If external appearances be agreeable, however, we receive the same pleasing impressions, whether they are or are not an original formation ; for green is gratifying to the eye, whether from the lustre of the emerald, or the verdure of the ground, or from a skilful painting of luxuriant foliage. We are equally pleased with the fallacious colour from artificial light, as by the reality of the blue in sunshine. But we are dissatisfied at having been mistaken.

The representations of inorganic matter are of little import, compared with the fluctuations of disguise amidst the society of mankind ; for it is here that we learn to prize the excellence of truth, and

* *Barclay on Life and Organization*, p. 285, 286.

feel the wounding of deceit. We are mistaken, our error was involuntary, for it might be the fallacy of the senses, a froward confidence in our own skill; but to become the victim of artful delusion, to be the dupe of the designing and the flagitious, and perhaps conducted to the verge of irretrievable ruin, is a warning too awful and impressive of the value of sincerity.

Truth, the first born of nature, is the parent of the most illustrious virtues that embellish the mind of man. It is the pure fountain whence are drawn justice, integrity, loyalty, and all those distinguished qualities inspiring mutual fidelity in mortals, and binding them to sustain their moral duties. We repose on it as on a rock, immoveable by the smiles of flattery, impenetrable by the tears of dissimulation.—The names and symbols of truth are few; where simplicity is beauty, it refuses ornament: the spotless robe of innocence never requires purification. But falsehood, a laboured product from the dark caverns of artful contrivance, the cherished offspring of haggard vice, has dismal attributes, and many names—we cannot rate their number. It forges flimsy chains, for falsehood cannot bind the wicked: magnetic like, as they enter within its sphere, they are more forcibly attracted to collision with guilt: it leads to dreary gulfs and quicksands, involving the fatal footstep deeper and deeper until there is no retreating.

Distrust awaits deception; the deceiver is met

with hatred and contempt. Candour is rewarded by love and estimation. Even where the language it speaks is sometimes ungracious, and where it frowns in authority, we admire and venerate the justice of its author; and if offensive to our feelings, it is because we have been regardless of moderating them to rectitude, or attuning them to corresponding sincerity. We follow the path of pleasure, we repose on a bed of roses; but the aspic lurks in concealment, we will not behold it, for it would disturb our flattering dream; fascination binds us, when the stern monitor rudely breaks the spell, and saves us from slumbering into death. Happy were it for many that his unwelcome voice were timely heard to arouse them from seductive iniquities.

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§ 1. *Dissimulation originating from Society.*—Nevertheless, let us inquire whether, according to the mode in which civilized society is constituted, the habitual intercourse of mankind can be carried on under the strictest observance of candour, and void of all disguise. Possibly we shall find that we are permitted to dissemble, as the means of shunning certain greater evils: not that we abide by the necessity of evasion, and correct it by sincerity; because, in common with every propensity, it is carried beyond due proportion or reasonable limits. Like the thoughtless youth of fiction, who could not rein the fiery steeds of his father, we are hurried on in the career beyond redemption.

Did we give unrestrained utterance to our sentiments, did we follow the immediate impulse of our inclinations, did we disclose every thing that we knew, undoubtedly the most pernicious consequences would ensue. We cannot affirm what would be the benefits of this inflexible adherence to truth in a state of nature and purity, for that has never yet been seen ; perhaps the result might be otherwise, but in our artificial condition, which is removed to so immeasurable a distance from it, such strange and peculiar effects would follow, that even to figure them far exceeds our calculation. Shame, aversion, contempt, and confusion, all the legions that discord summons to attend upon her, probably would conspire to annoy the peace of mankind. Perpetual apprehension and uncertainty would prevail ; there would be no reliance on secrecy veiling our weakness, or sheltering us from our enemies. Thus in a state so artificial, expediency seems to compel certain stages of dereliction from that most estimable of virtues, Truth.

But we seldom await the inconveniences which might be concomitant on rigid obedience to its precepts. We seldom find truth so firmly incorporated in our system, that we remain to be urged to despise it by the importunate expectations of society. Occasions are rather sought to set it at defiance : the profit of its observance is not sufficiently studied ; it may be dispensed with perhaps ; slight deviations will then be followed by greater latitude ; the path

widens; it is more inviting by relaxing its boundaries, and very soon, unless repressed by conscious wickedness, or disgraced by exposure, we are in danger of becoming familiar with deceit. Falsehood therefore resulting from the constitution of society is of early origin; but it is posterior to truth; for truth alone is given by nature, and falsehood is an artificial substitute.* Its lowest character is concealment, evasion, or embellishment; its highest seems perjury, the imposture of personation and treachery. But its intermediate stages are not to be described. There is no appearance which it cannot put on, nor any plausibility which it is incapable of assuming; for as many objects as subsist and incidents that occur, there may be as much, even more, corresponding falsehood: it has the largest share in the transactions of men, to the contempt, the subversion, and expulsion of truth. History is full of it from the beginning of the world, as if it were an indispensable ingredient in human affairs.

But mankind undergo a kind of regular education in falsehood.

We are taught to be ashamed of exposing our

* *Beattie, Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth,* Part I. chap. ii. § 8: "It is unnatural for human creatures to falsify." The reader will be greatly disappointed on comparing the substance of this work with its title. Possibly the author had the best intention; but controversial acrimony against those of the most distinguished talents and integrity, is not a very laudable mode of demonstrating it.

personal configuration, as if it were to bring disgrace for deformity. Scarcely can an infant lisp when it is instructed to repress its feelings ; to check propensities, to abstain from uttering what passes in its mind, to conceal what it has witnessed ; and those around it are visibly beguiling each other. Precept and example are in vigorous operation. Our love and admiration of truth force us to allow, that this is laying the rudiments of tuition in deceit before the pupil who is meant to acquire them.

Yet can it be avoided ? We may not be ashamed of personal exposure without any familiarity with vice ; for it is not a natural sentiment, and clothing has been invented more to adorn than for concealment. But can we preserve an incessant watch over us in the presence of those dearest pledges, forming part of ourselves, and fail to betray sentiments that were better avoided ? They whose innocence is unguarded, become unconsciously the depositories of our inmost secrets ; of which the vicious and artful, by whom they are environed, would soon take advantage.

Confidence is merited by so small a portion of the great mass of society, that were it only from prudence we are obliged to disguise our words, and to veil our thoughts and actions. Nowhere have mankind been hitherto found of that simplicity and excellence, as generously to disdain advantage from indiscreet disclosures : No such individuals are known as those with whom all that is to be heard,

or seen, or told, shall pass for nothing. On the contrary, numbers, to whom we believe it can be of no avail, are actually studying our countenance to probe the inward mind, or cunningly occupied in penetrating the recesses of the heart to extract its secrets. Though admitting the general diffusion of virtue, we feel unwilling to commit to others the power of doing us injury : if not so credulous, we shall be warned of the inferiority of the virtuous to those who spurn divine and human obligations. Thus we must reluctantly allow that there are prudential reasons for repressing the effusions of infantile sincerity.

It is not long, however, before the inexperienced youth discovers, from the very display of his passions, or from the impression of his open sentiments, that they should have been disguised. His discourse is listened to with impatience by his dissatisfied companions, less reflecting or more vicious than himself : the poignancy of derision wounds him : Abashed, he shrinks from repetition, and resolves to be wary : But scrutinizing his indiscretions, though unconscious of having erred, the dread of scorn renewed prohibits unrestrained effusions : he hides his passions, because they may render him ridiculous.

As yet he is safe ; let him advance no farther, he is only guarded by caution. He may remain in silence. Unwilling to hazard remarks, however, that may subject him to derision, the youth now

grown more experienced and bolder, begins to contemplate those that shall gain applause. What is required but a higher colouring than nature? the slightest shade of embellishment will render his narrative admirable. Approbation shews how well he knew his audience: neither scorn nor inconvenience repel him: and he plumes himself on the advantage which his penetration has thus so easily obtained. The bulwark between truth and falsehood broken down, gives free scope to invention: New and more luxuriant embellishments flourish; they are at the command of fancy, which the shortest practice shews to be a mine inexhaustible, always ready to discharge its treasures. So is the youthful deceiver ensnared by himself: forsaking candour, he found in imagination what was wanting in truth. The delusion proved grateful.

But if it be so with the one sex, where sincerity has been violated for procuring praise more than for shunning censure, how much farther must the other go in evasion or deception? Females have none of those masculine privileges to blush or not as suits convenience, to bear exposure of their little frailties, to sustain the reproaches too keenly levelled against their involuntary faults. They must be covered with shame, for fashion would make them shameful though only in appearance; and though their indiscretions be innocent in themselves, the delicacy of their sex compels reserve, where the effron-

tery of men feels nothing in disclosure. They labour under many stronger temptations to deceive.*

If truth be nature and falsehood art, some exertion, the exertion of contrivance, is required to substitute the one for the other. Surely therefore as we will rather follow the level path with ease than strain to leap the barrier, falsehood may be ever banished. But it is only by early initiation into the charms of truth; for hatred of the first impressions of vice preserves effectually from admiring the last.

Many circumstances, however, in the ordinary affairs of life, compel us to dissemble; nay, there seems a duty in sometimes practising a certain kind of hypocrisy or delusion. Offence is never to be given in our intercourse with society: and that people may be pleased with us, without which there can be no felicity, we must endeavour to please them with themselves. We are neither to make enemies by the bluntness of our observations, nor to say what is painful or offensive to our friends, though the subject be very true: we are even to dispense with the occasion calling for it without some urgent necessity. The common rules of polished life, those which surely are founded on expediency, demand the suppression of tokens of disapprobation, where the inflexible admiration of truth would prompt

* *Plato de Legibus*, lib. vi. seems to consider the feminine nature in itself of lower virtue, and that women have greater original duplicity than men.

their utterance. Cæsar rebuked his friends for shewing their dislike to some part of an entertainment, saying, "It was enough for you to abstain if it was disagreeable to you: for he who finds fault with rusticity, is himself a rustic."*—Neither, from similar causes, is there evident harm in advancing a little on the other side; for the good breeding of our artificial state admits of delicate compliments, where little sincerity is designed: nor are they unproductive of harmony. Were so rigid an adherence to truth exacted, as a precise description of what was heard or seen, or concluded or known, we should be obliged to express what would prove exceedingly offensive, merely from the fidelity of the representation. If we do describe we must describe faithfully, but we ought to be cautious where this is not demanded: for as none or very few are patient under the mildest criticism; as all are reluctant to credit the faults ascribed to them, and imperfections being more abundant than qualities, an host of enemies would be aroused, multiplied and vindictive perhaps in proportion to our candour. Prudence, or the love of tranquillity, forbid such an exposure as will disturb ourselves by disturbing others. If the faintest breath of flattery can dispel the gathering frown, who will provoke his friend to become an enemy?—Thus it is the condition of the world which partly prohibits mankind from being sincere.

* *Plutarch in vita Cæsaris.*

Again, are we to become our own calumniators? There are some austere moralists and some divines who never weigh the choice of their words, provided they have conviction of their truth, and seem to expect voluntary perfection in all who hear them. They charge us full in the face with the weaknesses inseparable from humanity: they demand an ample disclosure of frailties which would wound the penitent with regret, and cover him with confusion; and deem it a victory if they can frighten him into confession because it is undeniable. Such proceedings are of doubtful benefit. They rather tend to the encouragement of vice. Mild reproof in secret is preferable to loud reproaches, at which we tremble in hearing of the world. If openly reminded of those imperfections which better resolutions would induce us to amend, we lose the principal motive for reform in concealing them only to ourselves, for frequent exposure banishes shame. Surely the love of approbation indicates the desire of well-doing, and receiving it is the strongest stimulus to excel. We endeavour to shade our faults because it is never by their disclosure that we can hope for praise: and as the presence of an enemy is the watchword for caution, so shall we shudder at an avowal which is to bring us into public discredit. That sincerity which produces humiliation is so distressing, that its inflexible observance is scarcely to be expected of mortals, and its evasion is consistent with all the weakness of our nature. Those who practise the

most frequent confession, perhaps are the least penitent. Repetition at length becomes equivalent to exposure; the face of the confessor either becomes as the public gaze, or is utterly disregarded. Besides, there are many deeds of daily commission which may be converted to errors, chiefly by rendering them the subjects of discussion : unreasonable scrutiny forces them forward from obscurity, for acknowledgments which may embitter our reflections ; and render the exactions of sincerity of equivocal utility.

Integrity having been the basis of education, the violation of truth, in itself so amiable, and which commands our respect and admiration, is despised and detested. It is a paradox that falsehood and truth are alike lawful, according to the prevalence of public opinion : for falsehood can never be applauded unless when employed for a good purpose, where sincerity would injure, or where it is humane to deceive.

But falsehood is rarely invented with a laudable design : nor is truth smothered for the sake of impartiality. If we be permitted to disguise our involuntary shame, it is because the multitude is unmerciful, and the weak are easily crushed under the ignominy into which the designing have betrayed them. It is held safer to conceal a fault than to trust to forgiveness for its disclosure. Yet danger never quits deception : the slightest deviations from veracity may entail that very ruin on our-

selves or our friends from which we expected protection: they embroil deeper and deeper in their progress, no explanations can be sought from reference: we never can look back and say "it is true." —The emperor Theodosius having been presented by a poor man from Asia with an apple of remarkable size, sent it to his empress Eudocia, who gave it to a person named Paulinus, esteemed by her on account of his learning. Paulinus knowing nothing of its history, offered the apple as a rarity to Theodosius, who taxed Eudocia in regard to its first disposal. She said she had ate the apple; for she wished to dispel certain suspicions which the Emperor already entertained: and persisting in her asseverations, he passionately produced it before her. The falsehood of the Empress confirmed his jealousy; the innocent Paulinus was put to death; and she, finding that she had incurred the hatred of the Emperor, retreated to Jerusalem, where she died.* Such is the mischief which may flow from the most trivial evasion. It is vain to offer a substitute for what is subtracted from truth: nothing can mend the flaw, or join the chain once broken: nothing can restore its integrity; all our endeavours are futile and faulty.

A picture must present a faithful image: candour should be the sole embellishment of human words and actions; yet we soon discover the diffi-

* *Cedrenus Compendium Historiarum*, tom. i. p. 337. *Zonaras Annales*, lib. xiii. cap. 23.

culty seemingly prevalent in society, of observing a rule so simple. As the youth pleased his comrades by slighter deviations from sincerity, he came to please himself by those which were greater; and whether or not it is that in every thing we are so much urged by the world as to preclude adherence to our own best resolutions, we forget that truth is sacred. Many may esteem it of little consequence whether a crowd consisted of one hundred or a thousand persons; whether places we never have heard of are ten or twenty miles asunder; whether rivers are deep or shallow; whether fruit is sweet or sour: and we suffer nothing by the deception. But it is not innocent to deceive: the veracious are always veracious; and the just rather will injure themselves than be deficient in the obligations which their own sincerity imposes on them. A promise is made and accepted: surely with the design of performance, and with the expectation of its being fulfilled. It is an obligation reckoned on as such, nor can its infraction be palliated otherwise than by irresistible necessity, or justified but by the impunity of him who has received it. When the Roman senate refused to confirm the paction of their commander for the redemption of captives, he sold his own estate that he might keep his word. *

Evading our obligations in the transaction of

* *Sextus Aurelius Victor de Viris Illustribus*, cap. 43.

common affairs is unpardonable: the ties of morality bind us down to implement when far beyond the reach of law. What would be the condition of society were truth and sincerity banished, did men regard their promises imperative only so long as they proved convenient?—Yet on reviewing the recommendations of truth, the injunctions, the enactments, the penalties on falsehood, we should incline to think that the latter alone subsisted. As if mankind were thought incapable of veracity regarding their neighbour's affairs, they are adjured to abstain from lying even before they are allowed to open their lips on the precise matter: they are chained down by oaths in the outset, which shall bring them to disgrace in this world, and eternal punishment in the next if they be perjured.

Would it not be a curious investigation examining all the different kinds of oaths which have been contrived to fetter men to the observance of their promises, and their corresponding struggles and evasions to shake themselves free. One swears by his own life, another by that of his father, another by the life of the king, and last he invokes divine vengeance if he fails. Still all are insufficient; for the love of truth, and an approving conscience, are the only irresistible obligations. The wary and incredulous, those who believe nobody, never have been able to screen themselves from deception: Nor can it be otherwise, unless the desire to fulfil, not to violate a promise, preponderates.

Every reciprocal obligation, therefore, should be so equal, that infraction or fulfilment shall occasion equal profit or loss to either party. No one should be brought under such temptations as a remarkable store of virtue only can resist; nor are oaths to be imposed where there is an immediate temptation to perjury.

The mere love of deception seems to animate those who have nothing either to gain or to lose: they render themselves despicable, though they do not injure. It is otherwise, however, when a profligate puts on the guise of sanctity, or claims repute for moral virtue; he designs to dupe our credulity: he prevails, and we hate his successful hypocrisy. The imposture detected, our reprobation is mingled with resentment: we blame our want of penetration: we feel ashamed of our simplicity:—and let us confess it, we are as angry with ourselves as with the deceiver.

With all our admiration of truth, the artful discovering the vulnerable parts, can make an easy inroad on our weakness. Aiding their projects, we involuntarily become dupes to ourselves; just as the coquette borrowing an artificial complexion, mistakes it for an embellishment of her real and natural beauty; so do we erroneously conceive that we heighten our personal recommendations, while actually detracting from their merits. Holding defects for qualities, we are only our own deceivers: but multitudes are incessantly on the watch, plot-

ting deep designed and well laid contrivances to move our passions, or impose on our understanding, such as no common ingenuity can detect, nor any ordinary resolution is capable of resisting. Subjects superior to our conception, the authenticity of which we are forbid to question, compel our acquiescence: we are willing to credit to the utmost extent what our propensities lean powerfully to accept as true. Pretended sufferings, a fictitious tale of woe, of injuries or injustice, bear ready conviction to the humane: the good are deceived, because they are unsuspecting of guile; the bad find protection from sympathy, being none of their foibles. The consequence is distressing: less to us who have been duped; for we have only to regret our credulity, or to blame the impostor; but the calamities of the real sufferer are discredited, from the frequency with which they have been counterfeited.

Although we are deluded and deceived a thousand times, we are not to receive what is either plain or improbable without conviction of the senses, or a direct appeal to reason. Nor is it a judicious maxim, unless taken under infinite modifications, that "except we believe many things without proof, we never can believe any thing at all." *

On considering the multifarious wickedness pervading every great city, we are compelled to con-

* *Beattie*, Essay on Truth, Part i. Ch. 1.

clude that the incidents of the social arrangements produce so many temptations to vice, that it seems augmented in a ratio proportioned to the increase of numbers and enlarging population. Long ago some zealous person composed a treatise to warn the stranger against the impostures to which he would be exposed on visiting the metropolis, where such a picture is drawn as almost to inspire an antipathy at the inhabitants.*

§ 2. *Supernatural Knowledge.*—But quitting vague remarks and minor examples, which would lead to endless detail, for they are innumerable, let a few observations be directed to the higher descriptions of falsehood, those more interesting and of rarer occurrence, from the difficulty of perpetration and the hazard of detection; which are not the province of dealers in trick and chicanery, in craft and cozening for petty profits.

Here might be ranked the cheats who simply endeavour to delude our senses and bewilder our understanding; or the impostors who arrogate the privilege of celestial intercourse, and pretend to the faculties of prediction or divination: the impious claimants of a divine origin, or the wicked assumers of another character than their own, to personate individuals who have existed, or who still occupy a place in the world.

* *The Tricks of London laid Open*, in 12mo. *Lucas, Memoirs of Gamesters*, in 12mo.

Mankind, with an absurd curiosity, have ever been eager to discover that in which of all things it has pleased the Omnipotent to testify the greatest reserve, and darken by an impenetrable veil—the knowledge of futurity. Spite of so manifest a prohibition, some have presumptuously described the origin of nature, and foretold what shall be its close; and meantime elucidate all the future destinies of mankind. They professed an intuitive acquaintance with the past, and unblushingly revealed the counsels of Heaven, or what was to come. The credulous have always sought to read their own fortune in dreams and visions, in the figure of the clouds, the flowing of the fountain, or the moaning of the winds. But although credulity has been held the reproach even of this the most intellectual of nations; it is chiefly the rude and barbarous of all ages who have seen and heard wonders which never have been disclosed to the learned, and the commencement of rational enquiry has invariably proved their cessation. The works of the ancient pagans, however, and of every literary nation, are full of inspirations, omens, and natural convulsions, as prognosticating the will of Heaven. Thunders and lightnings were received as the voice of the Deity: earthquakes, storms, floods, and conflagrations, were interpreted as divine denunciations. * Brute ani-

* *Arrian de Expeditione Alexandri*, lib. ii. p. 88: Thunders and lightnings followed the solution of the Gordian knot by Alexander.

mals were believed to be invested with the faculty of speech, for the special purpose of foretelling calamities to mankind ; they were maintained at the public expense, and thought to be endowed with more than human penetration. In the liver of a beast was read the fate of kingdoms : the Roman senate was put in an agony by a sparrow tearing a grasshopper asunder. * Credulity on the one part inspired confidence on the other : Men, women, and children, were all admitted to be gifted with the powers of vaticination ; the most incoherent ravings were offered when awake, some even ventured predictions when asleep, or in pretended trances : Nothing was too hard to be foreseen : they made no scruple of overthrowing a flourishing city, of drowning or burning the world on a day appointed ; and, in their frantic menaces, they actually have spread terror among the weak and superstitious. Monstrous productions, uncommon seasons, and the troubled state of the elements, were witnessed with apprehension as indicative of celestial displeasure, which had to be averted by expiatory offerings. The offspring of a mule was alike held an awful portent at Rome and Babylon :† “ And now that I name Edessa,” says Procopius, “ I should not omit a prodigy which was seen a short time anterior to the

* *Julius Obsequens* de Prodigis et Supplementis Lycosthenis. — *Livy*, lib. xliii. cap. 13. xxxi. cap. 62. xxxii. cap. 1. xxxvi. cap. 21. xxxvii. cap. 37. xli. cap. 12. *Plutarch* in vita Syllæ.

† *Herodotus*, lib. iii. § 153.

interruption of the universal peace by Chosroes. A certain woman was delivered of a child endowed with the human form indeed, but having a double head : and what that portended the event disclosed ; for not only Edessa, and almost all the East, but a great part of the Roman empire, was involved in the contention of two princes." * An æra is prolific in prodigies, according to the agitations pervading the mind of the public : human infirmity of itself predisposes to apprehension, and the tribe of pretended prophets and diviners is never more numerous than while great revolutions are expected, or during the time of sudden and heavy calamities.† There is nothing so singular or absurd as shall not arouse two parties in affirmation and denial ; but the credulity of mankind in every age tends powerfully to stagger our faith in history. Could they find no way of proving the divine interposition without referring to the throes of nature ? Does Omnipotence, after exhibiting the grandeur of the universe, the wonderful subordination, division, and proportion of its parts, decree that some of them shall go wrong in manifestation of his will ?—The philosopher beholds with silent astonishment, with reverence, and admiration, the glorious orbs of the firmament, the powers of animal reproduction, the structure of living bodies, the arrangements of the

* *Procopius de Bello Gothico*, lib. iv. cap. 14.

† *Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. p. 469.

vegetable world : his mind is filled with awe, he dares not pronounce on the means ; he is confounded by the greatness. But the dignified language of nature is debased by the affected interpretations of blasphemous ignorance.

A weak argument may prevail more effectually than the soundest reasoning, if craftily directed to the intellect of the weak. The wise always distrust mystery, and the impostor is always mysterious ; but mystery is to many the most powerful conviction, as they persuade themselves that it is precisely what would be convincing that is veiled. Amidst the infinity of predictions, which imagination has given birth to since the beginning of history, it is not surprising that some have been fulfilled. Why ? —Because the majority anticipate probabilities : and at this day the modern diviner can very easily foresee dissension, disappointment, sickness, and death. Clouded by enigmas, as among the oracular responses of old, many might have been resolved into very different, almost into opposite interpretations. The coincidence of an event with a prediction has often excited remarkable surprize from coupling the two together, without regard to the intermediate means of accomplishment. Not even an infidel would be taxed with impiety for referring the most unintelligible prodigies to the necessary progress of nature ; for the operations of Omnipotence are the progress of nature : Nor if referring the fulfilment of predictions to the necessary course of events, is it

saying more than that the sun rose to-day because he set yesterday: that light and darkness result from the revolution of the earth. Those whose imbecility has consulted the position of the stars, the disposal of grains of sand, or the entrails of animals, to ascertain futurity, were deluding themselves: and if they ascribed the ordinary operations of nature to the agency of spirits, to necromantic powers, and other sources, they could not have done so had they seen the truth. In postponing things more wonderful to things less wonderful, they have been the unwitting abettors of imposture. Nevertheless, many events have happened which were well calculated to make a deep impression on the superstitious, and even on those contemning superstition. Success and reverse, glory and dishonour, felicity and disasters, are intimately interwoven with the destinies of man. We dream of some terrible calamity: we awaken in affright: Our fortunes are speedily ruined, or we have soon to weep the loss of our best beloved. No one will deride the vision, and smile if we couple it with our sorrow. On the coronation of Henry III. of France, he loudly complained that the crown wounded him, and it rolled over twice as if it would have fallen from his head. "This was interpreted an evil presage," and in a few years he was assassinated.* How could those who witnessed both the incidents, fail to be affected by them?

* *Journal des Choses Memorables durant le regne de Henry III.* ap *Recueil de Diverses Pieces*, p. 12.

The most vigorous minds never have been proof against presages: They have felt a lucky and an unlucky day: they have felt an antipathy to certain objects, or were impressed by sinister bodings at their appearance. Marius, one of the bravest generals of the Roman empire, was disconcerted by seeing two scorpions fighting: and Tycho Brahe, one of the greatest modern astronomers, was disconcerted if a hare crossed his road. In the days of Theophrastus, a weasel was as ominous as it is at present. *

Imposture is encouraged by human weakness and timidity; and the English, especially the female sex, are accused of unusual anxiety to penetrate into future events. A century ago, Muralt remarks "their curiosity to know things to come, their fondness of fortune-telling, and their credulity," which he ascribes to idleness.† Others impute to defective education, that "ladies, mistresses of families, are not ashamed to drive in their own carriages to the door of the cunning man;"‡ but it is generally maintained, that "superstition is perhaps more prevalent in England than might be expected."§ For two or three centuries, independently of the preceding, surprising instances of credulity and imposture could be advanced; not but

* *Theophrastus Characteres Ethici*, § 16.

† *Muralt*, Letters on the French and English Nations, Letter i. p. 12.

‡ *Wendeborn*, View of England, vol. ii. p. 485.

§ *Wolstoncroft*, Vindication of the Rights of Women, p. 416.

what the people, provoked at the deception, were willing enough to punish it when detected. A man was put to death in the reign of Elizabeth, "for conjuring to know where treasure was hid in the earth, and goods feloniously taken were become:" and not long anterior, "William Geffrey was whipped, for that he professed one J. Moore to be Christ our Saviour: and the same J. Moore was whipped till he confessed Christ to be in heaven, and himself a sinful man." * Still later, William Hacket suffered death for assumed divinity in 1591; and in 1605 an impostor named Haidock, a physician, even had the temerity to deliver a discourse in presence of King James while pretending to be asleep. But the sagacious monarch was not to be so easily duped, and compelled him to acknowledge the fraud. † A grand impostor, James Nayler, who admitted divine honours from his frenzied adherents, singing hymns in his praise, and strewing the way with flowers, occupied the House of Commons in 1656, and narrowly escaped with life for the lower penalty of having his tongue pierced, and his forehead branded. ‡ Less than thirty years ago, a madman was commended as a pious prophet in the British senate, and he too claimed immediate affinity with the Deity. § It is very questionable, notwith-

* *Stow*, Summary of the Chronicles of England, p. 299, 367.

† *Baker*, Chronicle, p. 408, 409.

‡ *Cobbet*, State Trials, vol. v. col. 801. *Baker*, p. 629.

§ The numerous predictions of this lunatic, published at different times, were collected in the *World's Doom*, 1795. 2 vols. in 12mo.

standing all these examples, which might be greatly augmented, whether the British nation, unless from their restless and speculative habits, be in the least degree more credulous than any other well-educated people. Gipsies are the privileged diviners of all countries, from the banks of the Thames to the banks of the Ganges.

Volumes might be filled with narratives of credulity and imposture ; as may be seen in the works of Moreson, Le Brun, Thiers, Brand, and other learned authors, together with the enactments of various states, which since the ninth century have been levelled against them.

Embarking in literary research, it would not be difficult to shew how the most impious pretensions, such as to divine paternity, were promoted by the superstitions of the times ; and we may select one brief instance illustrative of the means adopted to impose on female credulity.—Paulina, a Roman lady of high rank and irreproachable morals, became the object of criminal attachment, to a young man alike rich and noble. The testimonies of his regard, the treasures he offered to lay at her feet, were received with disdain ; her virtue was impregnable ; and reduced to despair by a consuming passion, the young man resolved to seek relief in suicide. Though Paulina venerated her moral duties, and felt the disgrace of swerving from conjugal fidelity to a husband who in every respect corresponded with her own integrity, superstition had obtained

a powerful hold of her mind. She was devoted to the worship of the goddess Isis, with whom Anubis, a deity of the other sex, was associated in the same temple. The priests of the sacred edifice, well tutored with the gold which the wealthy Roman lavished, craftily feigned that their god had become enamoured of Paulina ; and she whose virtue was of adamantine proof against all worldly temptations, could not withstand the glory of becoming the partner of a divinity. Superstition, which too easily dissolves all moral obligations, blinded her. Proud of the distinction shewn by the god Anubis, Paulina did not conceal her adventure from her intimate friends on leaving the temple : and the truth being vouched by her eminent character, without any other testimony, her auditors were filled with astonishment. However, the young nobleman, equally triumphant in the success of his stratagem, having met Paulina a short time after, derided her vain credulity, by disclosing himself as the real divinity of the sanctuary on the occasion of her having made so remarkable a visit. All the indignity of the odious imposture wounded this virtuous woman ; but instead of sinking under the shame of it, and taking vengeance on herself, she besought her husband's assistance to punish the duplicity. He discovered the whole matter to the Emperor, by whose command the priests were crucified, the statue of the goddess cast into the Tiber, and the temple demolished. *

* *Josephus Antiquitates Judæorum, lib. xviii. cap. 3. § 4.*

It is no small privilege which the weaker sex enjoy, that none other can declare our true paternity. On the incontrovertible word of his mother only must every man depend for belief of the noble or plebeian blood flowing in his veins: and with this he must be content, whether he feels the swelling of his soul for glory, or is borne down by grovelling appetites. We cannot wonder, therefore, if the heroes of antiquity, taught their descent from Jupiter, were fired with haughty ambition, and deemed themselves entitled to domineer on earth. Olympias, more modest, warned her son against slandering her fidelity to Philip.

Above five centuries ago, a delirious woman, named Guilielmina, said to be of English origin, founded a sect, as delirious as herself on the continent, believing her to be a holy incarnation, and that she was invested with a divine and masculine nature though in a female form. This impostor affirmed, that her death would operate the salvation of certain tribes of infidels, and she also predicted her own resurrection as a female, together with her ascent to heaven in presence of her friends and followers. She died at Milan, in the year 1281; but her tomb becoming the scene of many prodigies, her remains were dug up and committed to the flames in the year 1300, along with some of the most pertinacious adherents of her sect, whose persecutions she had foretold.*

* *Muralori, Antiquitates Italicae Medii Ævi*, tom. v. col. 91.

As if the human mind could never be at rest, five hundred years after the age of Guilielmina another female visionary, born about the year 1750, appeared in Britain, announcing herself as the medium of a miraculous incarnation of the Divinity. A crowd of fanatics arose around her, who actually erected chapels, and prepared a magnificent cradle, at great cost, for the reception of the expected birth, notwithstanding the age of the reputed parent then exceeded 65. They waited patiently from the year 1792 until the year 1813; and as the period of gestation utterly exceeded the limits assigned to human nature, they concluded on the proportional maturity of the fruit. This impostor died, however, without fulfilling her prediction; and her delirious adherents scarcely admitting the testimony of their own senses, that their patroness had paid the common debt of mankind, assembled in the year 1819 with trumpets and streamers in the streets of London, to proclaim the name of their approaching divinity in due solemnity. They were apprehended by the civil authority as vagrants.*

Mankind have always been engaged with omens and augury, by pretenders to immortality, to celestial origin, or intercourse with the inmates of heaven. The crafty impostor may rise in reputa-

* *Chaudon les Imposteurs demasques. Lacy, Prophetical Warnings. Enthusiastic Impostors no Divinely inspired Prophets. The Devil of Delphos, or Prophets of Baal. Life of Joanna Southcote.*

tion: if promising more than he can perform, he prepares his own detection. But the most sagacious, warned by the unlucky fate of those, whose temerity bespoke their love of truth, may countenance the cheat from prudent reserve. Attempting to pass for a divinity is one of the boldest projects; and on considering how precarious the adventure, that it has uniformly proved disastrous, and when most successful must be so soon betrayed, it can only be referred to a wicked love of deception, to ambition, or vanity; or perhaps the folly of self-delusion. Wild enthusiasts indeed are incapable of contemplating any other than the object on which their over-heated imagination broods: It is fervently indulged, and blindly prosecuted: nor do they stop to reason. Intuitive conceptions, or external impressions, seduce them from the truth: they yield to their propensities, and bewilder themselves inextricably. An orator is apt to lead us astray by the colouring of his speech: he hurries us into his opinions, if our own be already meeting him; and makes converts by weak arguments skilfully addressed to the passions. We see, we hear, we admire, we believe him at the moment; but in the hour of sober reflection on the substance of his discourse, we find it all of flimsy import. Enthusiasm in the same manner requires to be reined in by a frequent appeal to judgment.

The mysterious are always to be distrusted; feigning an acquaintance with secrets denied to all

others, they are only in quest of dupes. Not long ago treasures were squandered on alchymists, who pretended to have discovered the art of making gold. The framers of nativities, the compounders of talismans, amulets, and charms, were highly esteemed: the practice of necromancy, and the evocation of spirits, subsisted in thorough belief. But mysteries must disappear exactly in proportion to the extension of knowledge, and they must as certainly revive with its decay.

§ 3. *Personation*.—The personation of individuals, though not alike impious, ranks still higher in the order of falsehood, perhaps, than pretensions regarding celestial matters. It can be traced almost exclusively to ambition, avarice, or sensuality: conspiracy or combination frequently supports the principal agent, and he is uniformly to reap some immediate profit. Selfishness taught the contrivance as early as the interests of mankind began: for in the patriarchal ages, the blessings of the parent were surreptitiously obtained to the younger son by his personation of the elder.

The most notorious impostors have commonly represented themselves of illustrious origin, oppressed nobles, or injured princes; because the calamities of the great meet with unusual commiseration. Persons of exalted rank likewise being less familiar to the public gaze, contributes to maintain the deception. Repeated instances are told in history,

from the days of Smerdis downwards, of fictitious potentates struggling for recovery of their imaginary dominions, appealing to the love of a loyal people to aid their restoration, and conjuring them to fly to arms in their behalf. * The peace of many countries has been disturbed by rebellions sometimes terminating in favour of the usurper, after much effusion of innocent blood ; but more frequently in his discomfiture. Two personations were attempted in England during the reign of Henry VII. as is well known, by Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, the latter of whom not only gained the countenance of foreign princes, but raised a dangerous faction at home. In the preceding century, two or more impostors, by an extraordinary fallacy, were able, in succession, to personate the Prince Demetrius of Russia ; and one of them being acknowledged by the mother of that Prince as her own son, was actually crowned before detection. Another daring personation of the late Emperor Peter III. who had been previously assassinated, was attempted with transient success in the same country ; but the impostor at last suffered for his presumption. It was infinitely easier of old to support similar frauds than it would be at present, for many reasons. It is never difficult for the designing to lead the populace for a time, by addressing their passions : and the imagination, when inflamed, may be moulded

* *Herodotus*, lib. iii. § 30—35.

like wax under the hands of the artist, unless it becomes too subtile in the overheating, and thus eludes controul. The vulgar are so prone to believe whatever is within the verge of possibility, and indeed have advanced so many things utterly beyond it, that they become ready tools in their credulity : and credulity being proportioned to ignorance, it spreads the faster in the ruder stages. It is then also that internal communications and the means of speedy intelligence are the least practised, consequently the deception cannot be easily shewn by those who discover it.* Nevertheless it is very surprizing how long an imposture may be kept up with all facilities of detection among the best informed on public affairs.

In the year 1593, a female impostor appeared in London, calling herself the daughter of Philip King of Spain ; † and in the year 1628, a female impostor appeared in France, calling herself Henrietta de Bourbon, sister of Louis XIII., and Queen of Charles I. She took up her abode in a religious house, conducting herself as a person of the rank she had assumed, and was treated with the respect due to royalty. The principal noblemen of the

* *Bacon*, History of the Reign of King Henry VII. *Rocoles Imposteurs insignes*. *Sir Thomas Smith*, Voyage and Entertainment in Russia. *The Russian Impostor*.

† “ The 13th of December, a certain gentlewoman was, by the Council’s commandment, whipped through the city of London, for affirming herself to be the daughter of Philip, King of Spain.” *Stow*, Summary, p. 486.

English court were familiar to her, she said: she had retired to her native country to shun persecution on account of her religion; and she gave a distinct account of her journey, when examined as to her identity. The whole narrative was circumstantial, concise, and adapted to bear conviction. Nevertheless, after many persons had innocently supported the deception, by declaring themselves satisfied that she was none other than she represented, better evidence proved her to be an impostor.* The higher the personation, it is likely to be productive of the greater mischief: and the community can be exposed to few disasters surpassing the concomitants on competition for sovereignty. Those who happen to be worsted on either side, must infallibly be branded with the name of traitors, and visited with their punishment.

In regard to imposture on the ignorant, some very daring persons, presuming on the blindness of superstition, have ventured on personations of individuals existing long anterior to their own era. Many centuries ago, a crafty Jew in Crete, feigned himself the same lawgiver, Moses, who had led the Israelites through the Red Sea; and now entrusted with a divine mission, he proposed to conduct the Jewish islanders by similar means to the country of promise. During a whole year he journeyed through the island, endeavouring to preach himself into confidence, and then persuaded the inhabi-

* *Pilaval Causes Celebres ex Interessantes*, tom. ii. p. 204.

tants, accompanied by their wives and families, to quit their wealth and estates on a day appointed. The pretended Moses having reached a certain promontory overhanging the sea in his course, desired his deluded followers to cast themselves down. Those in the van of his squadron obeyed him; some were drowned; some were dashed to pieces on the rocks below; and many more would have perished, had not several fishermen and Christian merchants providentially been present, who rescued them from the waves, and drove back the wild enthusiasts. The cheat thus detected, the survivors equally enraged at their own credulity as at the impostor, sought to take vengeance on him: but he having prudently disappeared, they concluded that he was some evil spirit sent forth in human shape to injure their tribe. Many of the Cretans, however, are said to have been converted on occasion of these incidents. *

Every specious villain is in quest of a dupe on whom he shall exercise his talent in a thousand various forms. No transactions in human affairs have a certain guarantee against imposture. Multitudes are ever on the watch to deceive, and in every different fashion. Who can tell the deleterious drugs that are employed to flavour his beverage, or the spurious ingredients adulterating his food? Who

* *Socrates Historia Ecclesiastica*, lib. vii. cap. 38. *Historiæ Miscellæ*, lib. xiv. ap *Muratori Scriptores Rerum Italicarum*, tom. i. p. 94. This event is referred to the fifth century.

tries the scales of the seller, or the measure of the merchant? It is fortunate, perhaps, that we are so credulous,—at least it contributes towards our tranquillity. If there be one continued and incessant train of falsehood, it is well if, by submitting to its evils, they bear more lightly on us. Mankind, indeed, from vanity, sometimes blazon their reputation: but others, giving it a false colour for their own peculiar profit, blazon it still higher: they enter into a combination to cheat the world. The shameless empiric vaunts the quality of his compounds; more shameless are they who falsely offer testimony of their success. The literary impostor offers his ignorance under the name of learning; he culls from others to adorn himself. The ornaments of their taste, the treasures of their industry, are given as his own; and knaves conspire to call him famous, that they may reap the reward of the deception.* One conceals his name; another conceals his character; a third is imposing with both; he smiles in our face, amuses us with a plausible tale: we find we have been robbed on his retreat. Generally our want of discrimination is a great encouragement of all imposture: and so long as mankind are credulous, there will be impostors. But expected benefits are the strongest incentives to credulity; for who is sick that will not eagerly enquire for a physician? And hence are numberless

* *Struve* de Doctis Impostoribus. *Menckenius* de Charlataneria Eruditorum, rather satirises the absurdities of the Literati than illustrates their impostures.

medicines for every disease. * There are impostors adapting themselves to every kind of credulity.

The personation of individuals for lower objects for the most part introduce themselves as foreign noblemen, military officers, or privileged individuals. Some years ago one of our countrymen had the effrontery to go out and present himself as the governor of an island in the Mediterranean, under a pretended commission from a great kingdom. Many have made their appearance among us decorated with orders which they never received, and pretending to honours which they never won. After the recent peace had made the name of war a passport, many in Britain went forth from among their homely wares, clothed in the garb of our brave avengers, to impress stranger countries with their dignity. Never was metamorphosis more complete!

Among the various assumptions of character, a cruel and unmanly deception is sometimes attempted on the weaker sex, by worthless adventurers deluding them into marriage under a fictitious name. In this the most important of all human arrangements,

* A. D. 1550. "Also Grig, a poulterer, that had been taken for a cunning man in curing of diseases among women, being proved to be a crafty deceiver, was, on the eighth of September, set on the pillory in Southwark, and the lord mayor and the aldermen riding through the fair, he asked them and all the citizens forgiveness. It is to be wished that other such deceivers, without learning and long practice, were likewise tried and punished." *Stow, Summary*, p. 263.

because the most permanent, certain it is there is too much and too frequent disguise ; and those who can say they have been duped, not few in number, have had to lament it with tears of bitter sorrow. That which can terminate only with our mortal dissolution, truly requires all candour to aid us in anticipating the issue. Motives of affectionate regard, indeed, an ardent desire to gain possession of a beloved object whereon our sole felicity reposes, may extenuate the stratagem ; but its iniquity is ordinarily aggravated by the magnetic spell of attendant lucre. It is more than reproachful, that men should be so flagitious as to feign love for the person, while their love is for the person's wealth. A deep laid conspiracy was devised some years ago to ruin the peace and happiness of Angelica Kauffman, a celebrated female artist in London, by an individual whom she had mortified by a refusal, and who was not himself the agent in accomplishing it. He procured the introduction of one of the meanest birth to her, as a foreign nobleman of fortune and reputation, who, by a series of the most insidious artifices, contrived to gain her affections. Having succeeded here, the impostor next pretended that he found himself involved in sudden danger, from a plot against his own country, that nothing could preserve him but an immediate union, for he knew that he would be sheltered under the same distinguished patronage that she enjoyed in England. The credulous Angelica listened to his

plausible story, and the more readily for affection exaggerates alarm. But in a very short time the fraud appeared; the pretended nobleman proved a notorious cheat, of a description so low and obscure, that neither his real name nor nation have been ever ascertained. Yet the silly dupe, now becoming culpably compassionate for so worthless a knave, resisted the importunity of her friends to consign him to the hands of justice, and to restore her liberty by having the marriage legally dissolved. The impostor, however, discovering that he had embarked in too bold an adventure, and had brought himself into greater hazard than the fictitious plot against his country, by his base deception, thought of a retreat. Nevertheless, still endeavouring to profit by the fraud, he demanded an extravagant price for his consent to separation, which was proportionally reduced as urged by the apprehensions of merited punishment. A strong sense of commiseration was testified by the public at the time for the misfortunes of the amiable artist: her celebrity continued to rise still higher in Britain; and she afterwards retired to Rome, where she died in the year 1807.* It is odious and distressing that calamities of the first magnitude should thus be reserved for the lot of those frail beings so little qualified to endure them: that they who should be shielded

* *Gherardo di Rossi* vita di Angelica Kauffman, p. 33, et seq. *D'Uklanski*, Travels in Upper Italy, p. 111.

from insult, and saved from danger, should be the most exposed to treachery. More recently, it may be remembered, a similar imposture was practised on a beautiful female in humble life, dwelling in the west of England, for which atrocious fraud and other deceptions, an adept in villany received the reward of his demerits.* The incurable evils brought along with these offences, merely for gratification of the deceiver, render them the most abandoned. It is falsehood of the darkest complexion to delude a credulous woman into an indissoluble union only for the love of gain: to fetter her for ever, under pretended regard, only to be bettered by her possessions. Yet is not this the very principle on which the whole tribe of fortune-hunters frame their stratagems?

It is sometimes agitated whether one who has been thus betrayed into a union on false pretences, or by a false character, is bound to abide by it. This is certain, that if an individual were accepted unwittingly for a very different person, the party deceived may get free.

But many pretend to be single who are bound, and it is undoubted that bigamy for long has been no uncommon delinquency. In the year 1604 an act of Parliament passed "to restrain all persons from marriage until their former wives and former

* John Hatfield was convicted and executed at Carlisle in the year 1803 for this, together with personating a military officer, and various other crimes.

husbands be dead." Its penalties, however, are not to extend to the husbands or wives of those who shall absent themselves for seven years; which has given birth to the vulgar opinion that this term of separation of itself dissolves marriage.* Endowed with the means of observing, of comparing, and analyzing to their most ample extent, we seem to be invested with all the necessary protection against delusion, and with the immediate means of detecting imposture. It is not unlikely that mankind shall be misled in regard to what they have never seen; but it must appear incredible how a husband, a wife, a child, or a brother, while exhibited to view, shall be withdrawn from their recognition. Nevertheless, it is unquestionable, that, so far from speedy discovery of the fraud, an impostor has exhausted the patience and baffled the discrimination of the most sagacious. Solemn discussions have arose whether certain individuals were dead or alive, though ready to be identified on the spot: Parents have disowned their children, and children have denied their parents; kindred have rejected kindred; and characters assumed in personation have been so artfully sustained, as to involve such a maze of perplexities, that testimony absolutely opposite has proceeded from those the best qualified to know the truth. The following may be instanced, though not a new example.

A considerable time ago, Martin Guerre, a French

* Stat. 11 Jac. I. cap. 11.

peasant in creditable circumstances, married Bertrand de Rols, by whom, after the lapse of ten years, he had a son. Having offended his father about this time, he left his home, nor was any intelligence regarding him received during eight years. Bertrand then joyfully hailed his return, and lived happily with him for three years, in the course of which she had other two children. But suspicions now began to prevail, that this was not the real Martin Guerre her husband: and that the man assuming his name was an impostor, availing himself of certain points of resemblance to practise the bold deception. Bertrand, she who had reason to know him best, never doubted his identity; and the near relations of Martin himself, even his own sisters, discredited the alleged deceit. But the illusion of the former being at length dispelled, she complained of the imposture, and delivered the cheat into the hands of justice. Truly it must be admitted to be one of the most incredible incidents that a woman should not discover an impostor, or know who was her husband, after they had lived many years together both before and subsequent to separation, notwithstanding a long absence had intervened. But it will seem alike incredible, that, during the tedious judicial investigations which were now instituted, 30 or 40 witnesses declared their belief that here was the true Martin Guerre, that they knew it from certain marks and scars which time had not effaced, as well as from personal acquaintance with him.

However, a greater number swore that he was Arnaud de Tilh, an impostor, a person of bad character ; while about 60 made oath that they could not affirm positively whether he was Martin Guerre or not. Such conflicting evidence equally confounding the judges and the spectators, protracted the investigation a considerable time ; nor was there any likelihood of a satisfactory solution of the question. Bertrand had been married at the earliest age : her reputation was irreproachable, and every thing united in proving that any participation in the imposture would have been abhorrent to her. Meantime the perplexity of all parties was greatly augmented by the arrival of a man calling himself the real Martin Guerre, with a wooden leg, having lost his own, he said, in the wars with Spain. New investigation followed. The stranger and the accused supported their respective pretensions with equal confidence. But the stranger not only was recognized by his own sisters, who had already claimed the accused as their brother, but by Bertrand his wife, who, covered with shame, could hardly be restrained from laying violent hands on herself, while confessing her involuntary error. Incontrovertible evidence unfolded the whole mystery ; and the impostor at last acknowledged that, having been mistaken by two of his intimate friends for the man he had wronged, first encouraged him to attempt the personation. After a very remarkable trial, he was condemned to do penance, to ask pardon of the two

offended parties, and then to be executed on a gibbet erected before the house of Martin Guerre. His property was adjudged to his surviving daughter, born to him by Bertrand, on whom he had practised the guile.*

This extraordinary imposture cannot be said to have a parallel in recorded history. It was so artfully conducted; it had such unexpected co-adjutors, such unlikely dupes, so many persons effectually qualified to reveal it were deceived, that the mystery darkened as the process for unravelling it advanced. But however profound the obscuration of truth, it can only be covered by an artificial veil, always subject to removal, and ready to expose the deepest fallacy. So are hidden facts disclosed, and wicked stratagems brought to light, long after their agents have perished, and when their remembrance has almost sunk into oblivion.

§ 4. *Treachery*.—"There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as perfidy."† The most atrocious kind of falsehood is not personation, for this is not necessarily accompanied by evil; but treachery is that aggravation of baseness, whereby a pledge tacitly received, or expressly given, is violated.

The ordinary intercourse of the world may be conducted without inconvenience under many dis-

* *Pasquier*, *Recherches de la France*, liv. v. cap. 37. p. 570.
Pitaval Causes Celebres et Interessantes, tom. i. p. 1.

† *Bacon*, *Essays*, § 1.

guises: but falsehood, in every shape, is odious; and, although we do not feel the lower infringements of probity, an evil is generated which is most dangerous in its growth. Facility of deception renders it encouraging to deceive: he who begins with evasion, may end with treachery. Perhaps the best, as with the ungrateful, are the most exposed to its wounds: It is they whose candour always shines; who, familiar only with truth and integrity, hold perjury in abhorrence. They do not keep watch against wickedness; they neither have that uneasiness of suspicion, nor the dream of danger, which ever haunts the vicious: for “the honest man walks carelessly about his business; intending no harm, and suspecting none,” he reposes in security.* How cruel and insidious that treachery shall lurk under the mask of friendship; that the asp shall dwell in the rose; that he who pledged his love shall pierce the breast which glows for his welfare! Treachery has ever been deemed a crime of the deepest dye: the traitor, his name, and posterity, are doomed to be rooted out from the country that sheltered him when he betrayed his countrymen.

We rest confidently on the candour of our friends; we believe their professions or promises; their whole demeanour and our own are the invitations of mutual sincerity. A pledge, express or tacit, is inter-

* *Beattie, Essay on Truth, p. 340.*

changed : if it may be withdrawn, it may not be violated. The man is treacherous, however, who engages his word to confer a special benefit, yet offers it to another. The woman is treacherous who violates her conjugal faith : even the maid is pledged by her state to purity.

But treachery is of as many kinds as a pledge can be implied : the dealer in false words, or in false weights or measures, may stand on a parity, if we be invited to repose in the honesty of both. It is the confidence which has been offered which constitutes the nature of the offence against probity. Falsehood commonly prevails without any pledge or promise : but the subsistence of either is necessary to constitute the compound crime of treachery, and hence it is so atrocious.

But of all the pledges deemed the most inviolable in the ordinary circumstances of the world, is the plighted faith between the sexes, as involving their honour, their peace, and comfort, along with proffered sincerity : And it should be so,—for where shall we look for truth if falsehood shall here find a place ? The fell seducer approaches his victim with smiles and flattery. She listens to his vowed fidelity, and believes it sacred : he steals upon her affections, he soothes her dread, he wins her soul. That gem, whose lustre once sullied never can be purified again, is surrendered to the perfidious deceiver. But soon the delusion vanishes : her bright vision fades : consciousness tells her the

truth,—she has been undone by treachery. In vain the credulous being claims the promised boon : in vain she hopes the pledge will be redeemed,—falsehood offered it, and it is kept, perhaps with scoffs and scorn ; for the wretch who could betray her innocence, revelling in his guilt, knows full well that she is far beyond all human remedy. None but he on earth can save her ; and he is remorseless in his triumph. Then does the poor victim shrink in horror from the public gaze, astonished at human iniquity :—weeping her ruin,—deploring the faithlessness which has left her forsaken.

But do not let us cover with shame, or stamp with infamy, those who, weak and unsuspecting, have thus been basely duped by treachery. Rather should we compassionate their fate ; for the more pure they were in spirit, perhaps they were the less alive to the snares of perfidy. Mankind, nurtured in truth, who behold nature only as nature is, who know simplicity alone, and the voice of candour, cannot guard themselves against duplicity, of which they have never heard the name. If the credulous have erred therefore, because no mortal caution is proof against deceit, how could they have been protected ?

It is not easy to agree whether it be more flagitious aiming at our life, or to ruin our reputation. Our sufferings are speedily closed by the hand of the assassin : but he who betrays us into dishonour opens a never-healing wound, which always bleeds afresh ; to which even the sweets of revenge can

afford only a temporary palliation. Death alone can bring a sovereign cure. There are more atrocious kinds of treachery, indeed; for in all vices there are gradations: deluding an enemy to be avenged of him is generally held base, unless it be the single means of retaliation; but administering a deleterious potion to a friend as a salutary medicine, scarcely can be surpassed by the highest iniquity.

It was not uncommon during the barbarous ages of European history, to present the cup of hospitality pregnant with death: or sometimes as the stranger partook of it, he received a mortal blow from the hand of an assassin. Hence the guest would call for a pledge for his security, or it was proffered by the host in first tasting the beverage as he gave it. The remains of this custom in Britain is yet within remembrance, and anecdotes are current of some who perished by such odious treachery.* In certain uncivilized countries, when a stranger reaches the village of the chief, he is offered a vessel of hydromel, which the chief himself tasting, means to shew that he is incapable of poisoning his guest.† It is said to be no rare occur-

* An assassination was perpetrated under similar circumstances in the year 1806, on an emissary of our government, two or three days journey from Constantinople. *M'Gill's Travels*, vol. ii. p. 33.

† *Fresange Voyage a Madagascar*, en 1802, 1803, ap. *Malte-Brun*, *Annales de Voyages*, tom. ii. p. 3.

rence in the state of Tripoli, to destroy an object of dislike by a cup of poisoned coffee, so prepared as either to occasion immediate death, or to prolong the misery of the sufferer for months.* This has been a vice of frequent reproach on many kingdoms in ancient and modern times. In Italy, some kinds of treachery deluding the unwary to destruction, were considered as much a token of address among the abandoned as a crime. Even France was remarkable for it in the reign of Louis XIV. and so recently as during the earlier part of that of Louis XVI. A new race of miscreants of a different character sprung up every year; and an historian observes, "Last year there came that of poisoners, known by the name of Quietists, who administered a dangerous and mortal soporific along with tobacco and liquors."† In the territory of Congo, the authors of the account of our late expedition relate, that the frequency of poisoning victuals has led to an established fashion in the guest invariably desiring whoever presents meat or drink to taste it previously, and in offering either to a visitor the host always proposes to do so himself.‡ The Abbé Proyart does not seem to have been aware, that when an inhabitant of the neighbouring regions, first bit a portion from what he prepared

* *Blaquiere*, Letters from the Mediterranean, vol. ii. p. 74.

† *Mercier* Tableau de Paris, tom. iii. p. 280.

‡ *Tuckey*, Narrative of the Expedition to the River Zaire, p. 163.

for his guest, and offered it, saying, “eat upon my assurance,” more than mere civility was designed. He saw two children in an orchard mutually exchanging fruit, on which the marks of their teeth were imprinted.* Vice is full of contrivance; its ingenuity in plotting mischief might be assumed as an argument in favour of the originality of virtue; for precedence ought to be always ascribed to simplicity. Candour is simplicity, therefore it is natural; whence deceit must be held artificial, or a deviation from nature. We should deem it no slight consolation, amidst the varieties and the prevalence of human vices, that an attribute so excellent as truth is evidently an original virtue. But, alas! the iniquity of mankind; it knows not any repose: the same species of wickedness is harboured in the mind; the same means of disclosure and perpetration are resorted to, where no other circumstances demand a correspondence. It is written in ancient history, that Parysatis accomplished the destruction of a rival by the contaminated portion of a bird divided with a blade poisoned only on one side, while she could take the other to herself in safety: and modern history relates, that an eastern prince of the sixteenth century perished from a similar device in cutting asunder a melon.†

Confidence, express or implied, distinguishes the iniquity of the traitor from all other falsehood.

* *Proyart*, Histoire de Loango, p. 73.

† *Marini*, Relation de Tunquin, p. 107.

Some deceive, they think only of the deception ; it succeeds, or it proves abortive, and it is done. The traitor acts a double part ; he is bound by his condition in a pledge, or he first wiles himself into the confidence of those designed to be betrayed. We shudder at the coolness and deliberation of his diabolical machinations ; at the callous unconcern with which he beholds the victim he is about to sacrifice ; at the studied indifference with which he awaits the moment of destruction. Smooth and smiling, he grasps the dagger.—A horrible wretch, Matthew Clarke, already inured to vice, insinuated himself into the affections of a young woman not far from London, and probably with some sincerity on his part in the outset. He engaged in the employment of a person with whom she dwelt, and purchased a wedding-ring as if with the full intent of completing his promises. One day having left his fellow-labourers in the fields, he returned home, as she must have believed, for the sake of enjoying her society ; and certainly she welcomed him, for as he entered the room she presented him with some refreshing draught. Not deficient in the external tokens of regard, he kissed her, sat down, and carried on the conversation : then rising, the treacherous villain warmly embracing the unsuspecting victim a second time, took the same moment to pierce her innocent heart. The miserable creature struggled to escape his murderous weapon ; but guiding it too securely, for the plot was well laid, he quickly finished his work of death.

A crime more execrable scarcely occupies the annals of vice; for it is incredible that even a monster under the mask of affection, and of affection of such a kind, could atrociously resolve to bereave the object reposing on its truth and gentleness of her existence. It belongs to the artifice of the seducer, indeed, sometimes to conduct the deluded being who has received his vows to secrecy, and there aggravate his guilt by taking her life, as he had taken her honour—as if a lesser offence could be obliterated by a greater. Yet it affords some consolation to the sorrowing survivors of the victims who have perished by this perfidious ferocity, that justice usually abridges the career of the abandoned perpetrator. The detestable wretch whose cruelty sacrificed his mistress, soon atoned for the iniquity in which he was so early practised: he had only reached the twenty-fourth year of his age when he paid its forfeit.* Many crimes nearly resembling the preceding have been committed, though not under the identical circumstances; but under those by no means of a distant complexion. Pretended affection readily obtains confidence; for the heart naturally warms to those who take an interest in us: and then is danger most imminent from the wicked. So shall we find, on investigation,

* *Select Trials at the Old Bailey, 1720—1724, p. 43.* London, 1734, in 8vo. This assassin suffered at Tyburn on the 28th of July 1721, under all the horrors of a guilty conscience.

that men, to rid themselves of the complaints originating from their own perfidy, added sometimes to dread of exposure and inconvenience from expected incumbrances, can bring their mind to deeds of treachery abhorrent to nature; for nature had inspired the previous love.

The deceiver must be visited by unqualified reprobation, although a design be only for personal profit without injury to the deceived, where his offence is perfidy. When Camillus ordered the treacherous schoolmaster to be scourged, instead of seizing the children, his pupils, whom he had brought to the camp of the Romans the enemies of their parents, he testified a magnanimous disdain of victory through the medium of wounded affections, while inflicting a well-merited punishment.* But the virtue of Camillus is a remarkable exception. Mankind are to be reproached with perfidy, as a universal ingredient in the destruction of their enemies. Even in sacred writ we read that all the prophets, servants, and priests of a Pagan idol, were invited to offer a sacrifice to their Deity, by the king of the Jews, merely to obtain an opportunity of massacring them collectively. On the same iniquitous principle, Servius Galba having convoked three of the Lusitanian States as if for some benefit, he seized seven thousand of them, among whom was the flower of their youth; and disarming them,

* *Livy*, lib. v. cap. 27.

sold part and massacred the remainder.* Theodosius also, in the later ages of the empire, having been received contumeliously at Thessalonica, where he lost an officer in a popular tumult, seems to have resolved on bloody vengeance by a wicked stratagem. He published the celebration of equestrian games, which, from the noted propensity of the people to sports, would not fail to attract a great multitude of spectators; and accordingly the theatre being filled, he, like the Jewish monarch, had an opportunity of massacring them collectively. His legions surrounding the edifice, destroyed 15,000 souls. The rank and power of the royal delinquent removed him from the reach of temporal punishment; but he suffered as severe a penalty as could be inflicted, in St Ambrose excommunicating him from the rites of the church.†

Decoying the guilty to evil is not so criminal certainly as deluding the innocent to destruction. If military history abound in stratagems, it is from the hypothesis, one not inconvenient to its professors, that avowed enemies are seeking mutual extermination; and that there is no protection except in superiority. It would be mockery to defend ensnaring the innocent: but betraying the guilty seems to be treachery of a lower denomination. No one has reprehended Timoclea for destroying the author of her disgrace: But the nobleman of mo-

* *Valerius Maximus*, lib. ix. cap. 6. de Perfidia.

† *Zonaras Annales*, lib. xiii. cap. 18.

dern times, who, dishonoured by the intrigues of his wife, compelled her to make an assignation, that he might assassinate her paramour, is beheld under more questionable colours.*

The ancients exultingly relate, that a woman consented to marry the known murderer of her husband, in order that, in the necessary course of completing the sanctified rites, he might swallow a deleterious potion. Then kneeling in the temple, she exclaimed, "I thank thee, O Diana, for here having vouchsafed me the power of avenging my husband's blood, which was shed for my sake!"†

Strangers to the uncertainties and oppressions of tyranny, and dwelling in confident security in a land of freedom, we feel a natural abhorrence to the rod of despotism. Our laws are severe; they are the remnants of barbarous ages, which the patriotic have been yet unable to modify to the present times; they were exacted, perhaps, by necessities: and those who now fancy themselves modern legislators, seem to profess a religious adherence to the same most erroneous principles, thinking no punishment can be hard enough for the lowest offence.

* *Rosset Histoires Tragiques de Notre Temps*, Hist. xvii. p. 490. relates the fate which thus befel Bussi d'Amboise, governor of Anjou, in 1579, under fictitious names. *Dupleix*, *Histoire de Henri III.* p. 77. The Marquis D'Albret is said to have been betrayed in the same manner in 1678.

† *Polyænus Stratagemata*, lib. viii. cap. 39. Several other examples of conjugal affection are given by the author, cap. 34. and lib. vii. cap. 49.

But the laws are mildly administered, and the people are protected by each other against their abuse. What we are ready to complain of as extortion, injury, restraint and cruelty, would seem light to the inhabitants of countries liable to aggressions far more grievous to be borne. If one is called on for his testimony, it must be received exactly in the shape in which he chuses to offer it: if one deny the offence laid to his charge, he is simply put on his trial, and he is allowed all possible means to prove his accusers perjured. If they cannot make him guilty, he escapes. But in countries where the rights of the citizen are unequally appreciated, and where the menaces of the law, untempered by humanity, permit the judge to contemplate punishment rather than palliation, the detection of crime is sought by torturing the accused into confession. When racked by agonies surpassing the endurance of human nature, some abatement of the torment is allowed or a promise of indemnity is offered for revealing the truth. Prospects are certainty to the miserable: persisting in denial, death is before them; they confess offences which their minds never harboured, and which they were incapable of committing. But, instead of the pledge being kept for this apparent surrender of conscience, they are accounted criminal, and with a show of justice condemned on words too late to be retracted.

Confessions, whatever be their description, if escaping under either pleasing or painful sensations,

and then they are readiest to be made, depend on the command which mankind retain over themselves. We offer them spontaneously; we are persuaded into them, or they are extorted from us: they are sincere, ample, or restricted, according to our fortitude, and our belief of their expediency. But it is doubtful whether, in any of these cases, they are not always the indications of a dangerous imbecility.

Previous to evidence of his guilt from himself or others, the accused has no violence to apprehend in Britain. The rebel peers who suffered for their temerity in the year 1716, bitterly complained that expectations of the royal mercy induced them to plead guilty to their indictments. All died with fortitude, warm in expressions of loyalty to the family which had abdicated the throne. If treachery was employed to obtain their avowal of treasons, it is not satisfactorily shown. Yet a political pledge usually seems to be regarded the least binding of any. *

Every promise is to be deemed sacred; even the belief of a promise, though unfounded, ought to be respected; for advantage is not to be taken of the innocent mistakes of mankind: nor is the pledge for performance to be evaded by subtilties. Is a promise of indemnity given by one binding on his posterity? When David, king of the Jews, was dying, he exacted a promise from his son, that he

* *Register of the Rebellion*, var. loc. 1718, in 8vo.

should afterwards put certain persons to death, for whose safety he had solemnly pledged himself. *

How a promise shall be fulfilled, is the anxious concern of the good ; how it shall be evaded, can be desired only by the bad ; for none other can desire to profit by equivocations. But the most artful evasions have proved how men can reconcile themselves to treachery. A Turkish emperor, it is said, entertaining a warm partiality for one of his subjects, solemnly vowed that he never would take his life. The favour of princes is precarious : conceiving a dislike to the person afterwards, he repented of his oath, and became as desirous of destroying as he had been of preserving him. But the scruples of conscience, his promise, bound his hands. How could he gratify himself without offending Heaven ? He consulted the chief of his religion, that some subtlety might be found as a remedy. " Life," said the high-priest to his master, " consists in perpetual watching : a man asleep, being void of sense, cannot be said to live." The emperor was convinced : he reconciled his conscience with his wishes, and the fallen favourite never awakened more to this world. † As craft commences candour terminates ;

* In an æra of intolerance which should have passed away, the celebrated Bayle suffered a real persecution for commenting freely on the character of David. *Maizeaux Vie de Bayle*, tom. ii.

† *Knolles*, Turkish History, vol. i. p. 440.—Vide *Ælian Variæ Historiæ*, lib. xii. cap. 8.

and promises are felt to be binding only by those who have a suitable sense of moral virtue: they relax with its relaxation. The strict observance of our word is no imperfect test of our qualities; at least it has not been found that fidelity is coupled with notorious vices. If the flagitious be ever mutually faithful in their deeds of iniquity, they are infringing truth and probity to others.

When Regulus, a prisoner at Carthage, was sent home with proposals for peace, he dissuaded his countrymen from accepting them, and returned, knowing that he must perish. His promise had been given. "But as Regulus is to be commended for preserving his oath," says Cicero, "so are those whom Hannibal sent to the senate on their parole after the battle of Cannæ."* They engaged to return to captivity, in event of the rejection of the terms of their liberation; and in consequence, eight of them kept their promise. Two of the number forgetful of it, evaded performance, observing that it might be fulfilled at any time; but their lives were rendered so miserable by the disgrace attached to its infringement, that both committed suicide. Modern history affords remarkable instances—should we call them remarkable—of illustrious prisoners returning to captivity when unable to obtain from their own country accession to the terms of their

* *Cicero de Officiis*, lib. iii. cap. 32. *Aulus Gellius*, lib. vii. cap. 18.

ransom : as John King of France, and Guy Earl of Flanders. Among civilized nations there is such implicit reliance on the promise of a military officer, that the parole of honour is always accepted from a prisoner. Very few instances can be produced of its being violated by our countrymen. In some foreign kingdom, it is related that persons accused of offences are not regularly put upon their trial ; and that although condemned, their execution is postponed during an indefinite term. A convict, in these circumstances, having been remitted to his cell, remained even for years under sentence ; but either protesting his innocence, or for some other cause, the jailor at length seeing no probability of being relieved from the burden of his custody, and having reason to conclude him to be a man of the strictest veracity, consented to his temporary enlargement. The prisoner was allowed to go forth to the fields to earn his daily bread in the morning, and he returned regularly to his prison at night. An order, after a very long interval, at last came for his execution, and true to his word, the prisoner returned just as he had been accustomed, though now to undergo the final punishment decreed. Powerful intercession, however, in so singular a case, obtained a reprieve for the honest culprit.

That odious thirst of lucre which knows no compassion, has invented a treachery of the most detestable species,—trepanning mankind into slavery. European nations are loudly charged with frequent-

ly inviting the chiefs of territories adjoining to their foreign possessions to partake of entertainments on board of vessels lying at anchor, and setting sail amidst the festivity, thus betray the credulous guests into everlasting servitude. The late Russian circumnavigators accuse the American traders from the United States of perfidiously carrying off the islanders of the South Seas, for the purpose of forming a colony; but their prisoners shewed that they preferred death to slavery.* A recent author also alleges, that the Corsairs of the Barbary States often gain access to merchant ships, under pretence of friendship; or basely feigning distress, they surprise and overpower the generous crew willing to afford them assistance. †

Temptations of profit aggravate the disposition of the wicked. The lives of the innocent have been repeatedly taken in England, because abandoned wretches have perjured themselves to obtain the trifling recompence bestowed for convicting delinquents. Foreigners, however, who more readily distinguish national character, ascribe sincerity and honesty to the English portion of the inhabitants of this island;‡ while the Scotch, and especially the High-

* *Kotzebue, Voyage of Discovery*, vol. i. p. 142, 143, 144.

† *Blaquiere, Letters from the Mediterranean*, vol. ii. p. 130.

‡ *Wendeborn, View of England*, vol. i. p. 392: "The generality of this nation is good and honest, and yields in this respect to no nation whatever."

landers, have been always renowned for fidelity.* In modern times, when the poorest might have been enriched by treasures for the head of one of the exiled family of Stewart, he found himself safe among them ; and it is said in older histories, that a chief having been slain in the house of a pretended friend, a law was enacted to visit similar offences with the higher pains of treason. A massacre perpetrated by the military on the people with whom they were quartered, in the reign of William and Mary, is yet spoke of with abhorrence. The French are accused of insincerity : the Spaniards were deemed a loyal nation. When the Duke de Bourbon rebelling against Francis I. of France, joined the Spanish army, the Emperor Charles V. ordered one of his nobles to accommodate him with a palace ; “ I cannot refuse any thing that your Majesty commands,” he replied ; “ but I declare that if the Duke lodges there, I shall burn it on his departure as a place contaminated by perfidy, and which cannot be again occupied by the honourable.” He is reported actually to have done so.

The modification of moral sentiment prevents the same impressions on every one by falsehood or dishonour : nor do the circumstances of human affairs admit of it. Treachery is base, yet surprising an enemy in war is always held meritorious ; nor is

* *Moryson, Ten Years Travels, Part iii. B. 1. ch. 3. p. 46 :*
“ Fidelity to the Scots.”

the victor reprobated who gains the day by deluding him into ambush. But the pledge of security given for his surrender is universally expected to be inviolable.

Of all the tacit bonds uniting the frame of society, sincerity is at once the most amiable and the most essential. It is the origin, the foundation and support of many of the purest virtues ; and according as it is forsaken, the way is opened to vice. Sincerity courts our confidence : we fly to its arms : its embrace is ardent : there is honesty in its admonition. The candid are admired, beloved, and esteemed ; even the perfidious are overawed by immaculate integrity.

Thus it is illustrated, that truth is a radical and innate virtue of the human race ; and were it not from subsequent corruptions, as it shone at the hour of their birth, so would it attend them until the day of dissolution.

CHAPTER VII.

ANCIENT VIEWS OF RETRIBUTION.

LET a brief chapter, calling it either historical or traditional, be devoted to the credulity of our ancestors, was it such, while substituting our discourse as the language held by them.

No imperfections are discoverable in the order and arrangements of the universe : each of the minutest parts is apparently fulfilling some peculiar purpose for which it is sufficient of itself. The same train of occurrences, diversified in individuality, but of one uniform tendency, is in perpetual operation : although we cannot see the cause—for it is doubtful if any final causes be revealed—we witness that portion of the chain of incident which we denominate effect ; something transient, or something having arrived at its apparent conclusion, by which our limited faculties are arrested. Too often the wicked appear to glory amidst their iniquities : we wonder at their fortune : we ask how are they entitled to enjoy the obvious favour of Heaven, and reap so many distinguished benefits from men : they proudly rear their heads, they taste of ease and luxury, they are met with adulation ; while the virtuous, falling into penury and affliction, are rudely thrust aside, seemingly to struggle with privations, and to sink under the de-

nial of what is exacted by the necessities of human nature. We conclude, and perhaps justly in our contracted view, that the dispensation is unequal : we have not yet entered on any investigation which might prove that there is no great disparity in the relative condition of mankind. But sometimes it is urged on our observation, that however long and unbridled a vicious career, and however far beyond the power of mortal correction, it is at last overtaken by divine retribution. The mystery is then developed ; the flattering picture of felicity fades, and the crime is now referred to the punishment. We are convinced, from what is displayed before us, that it is fallacious to ascribe the greatest good to artificial pleasures ; for, that real enjoyment and untroubled conscience, cannot belong to the bad.

Impressed by a deep sense of the equitable dispensations of Heaven, the vulgar believe in retribution : nor is it a slender consolation to the injured and the miserable to be enabled to say, “ No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.” They feel that the authors of wrong have to dread the inevitable menaces of retributive justice ; that they shall be brought to suffer in due season, as they have been instrumental in evil.

A crime is patent : it is not avenged by any visible penalty : but although the punishment be deferred, none can maintain that it has not been decreed, or that its postponement is for another purpose

than rendering it the more signal. Nature herself has doomed an invisible punishment, and that the most excruciating, in the torments of a guilty conscience.

Human life is made up of error; for it is the lot assigned to man along with his being: but the faults of the good are unconsciously committed, nor ought they to suffer from self-crimination. No precautions permitted to mortals can ensure them from fallability: The most benevolent designs may end abortive. It is the vicious wilfully plunging amidst enormities, who merit the pains from which the virtuous should be exempted.

Perhaps the perpetrator is neither restrained by apprehensions of infamy, nor the dread of punishment, from the fact he meditates. He does not enquire whether it will be offensive in the sight of the Deity, or iniquitous among his fellow men. Solely intent on the means of commission, ingenuity is racked to find the time, the place, the opportunity. The eye of pity is closed in his eagerness: the feelings of love are blunted, the sense of justice forgot. Stealing on tiptoe, he watches in secret, he hardly breathes.—His prey approaches during an anxious pause.—The deadly blow is struck.—But even the nearest moment the change is still more terrible. Now the successful plot must be veiled from human knowledge. The darkness of night has screened the ruthless assassin: Yet to-morrow's sun will hasten to dawn upon him;—how shall he disguise himself, and hide his doings! At this very instant

some hidden witness may betray the wicked deed ; the dumb animals of the creation seem ready to inveigh against it ; the rustling of the leaves are threatening : he starts at the sound of his own footstep—the howling of the blast is horrid in his ears. He quakes—he flies. He covers himself from the world.

Soon is it discovered that, although the deep-laid stratagem has succeeded, the perpetrator has been engaged in contriving his own perdition. An awful scrutiny begins, arousing the pangs of an affrighted conscience, which, as the avenging furies pursue the guilty wretch, banish the peace of innocence, forbid repose, and drive him to distraction and despair. Concealment gives no confidence ; secrecy promises no protection ; he wanders about like a spectre on earth, eternally haunted by himself. Mankind have not yet summoned him to make atonement for his iniquity, but omnipotent nature is exacting it from him in the stings of contrition.

The most hardened needs not hope that conscience may be lulled to sleep, and cease to persecute : that the remembrance of prayers for pardon, of cries for mercy, or the tears of agonizing terror, will fade, die away, and be obliterated. The stings are sharpening, the horrors of remorse are aggravated, as they linger in vain expectation ; the stifled groans will ever reverberate through the brain. At length the tortures endured on earth may lead the author of an atrocious deed, done with such diabolical artifice as escaping suspicion, left Hea-

ven, its only witness, to disclose it to the knowledge of man, and seek relief in punishment.—The nephew of a canon of Liege who was accused of having murdered a child together with other two of his relations, was condemned and executed amidst exquisite torments, which he bore with incredible fortitude. A letter-carrier of that city, the real perpetrator of the crime, beheld the fate of this unhappy victim of suspicion, and then abandoned the place. Some time afterwards, however, he returned to the very scene of his own iniquity, for he could not rest; and now, unable to endure the pangs of remorse, he voluntarily offered himself before the judges, imploring them to release him from his sufferings by a speedy death. In thus confessing his offence, he affirmed, that while awake he constantly saw the innocent child whom he said he had strangled, as if shaking the scourge of a fury at him, with flames such as those in which the nephew of the canon had perished;—and uttering these words in presence of the tribunal, he continually fanned his face with his hands as if to blow the flames aside. Combined with other circumstances, the evidence proved sufficient, and the man made public atonement with his life in the year 1584.*

* *Henricus ab Heers* Observations Medicæ, p. 145: *Spadacrene*, 1645. “Cum hæc pro tribunali diceret, manibus assiduo faciem, quasi flammæ discussurus ventilabat.”

“It may not be forgotten that Judge Morgan, who gave the

Let no one therefore hope to divest himself of accusing conscience. A man may glory in vanquishing an enemy, who would have been merciless in his victory ; he may rejoice in a fortunate achievement wherein others have fallen ; he may congratulate himself on warding off the blow which it would have been dangerous to receive : but to overcome a defenceless, a weaker, or inoffensive being, to calumniate the innocent, to wound by treachery, or prey upon the needy, though successful undertakings, can never be soothed by self-approval.

The pangs of contrition, therefore, are the true vengeance inflicted on the guilty, whom the hand of the injured, or the arm of justice administered by men, are unable to reach.

Of old, when men were exposed to the uncertainties of a barbarous age, and liable to the sad reverses of tumultuous times ; when cruelty was sanctioned by power, and the oppressor could sit enthroned to glory in the ruin which he meditated, the innocent found their last refuge in adjuring implacable enemies to meet them in presence of the Omnipotent. In this manner they sought to offer a protestation in their own behalf, confiding in the supreme dispensation of that justice from Heaven above, which they had been denied on earth.

sentence against her, shortly after fell mad, and in his raving cried continually to have the lady Jane Grey taken away from him, and so ended his life." *Baker, Chronicle*, p. 320.

Recalled from this sublunary sphere, and about to render up an account of all earthly concerns, they were not listened to as having spoke in vain: their solemn and mysterious words were preserved the deepest in remembrance. A fate unlooked for as numbered among human destinies, overtook the author of their wrongs;—who could refrain from coupling the charge along with it, and believing that it was meant to vindicate their fame, that here was the work of retribution?

Such especially was the appeal of the martyr who perished for his own and the religion of his fathers; such of the loyalist who died for the treasons of his kindred.

When Jacques de Molay, Grand Master of the Templars, was burnt alive on suppression of his order in the year 1312, he exclaimed from the stake in a loud voice, “Clement, unjust judge, cruel executioner, I summon thee to appear before the tribunal of God within forty days!” The Pope, who beheld the tragedy, is said to have died soon after.* Ferdinand IV. King of Castile, having condemned two brothers named Carvajal unjustly accused of murder, they in like manner summoned him to appear at the divine tribunal within thirty days, and

* *Mezeray*, Histoire de France, tom. ii. p. 334, 335. “Some write, that he also summoned the king to appear within a year. It is certain that he died in that time, and the Pope within the forty days.”

in less than that time his death followed, while in the flower of his age. *

History affords numerous examples sufficiently calculated to sustain the humble and to appal the powerful, by shewing how futile is confidence during prosperity; that the swellings of pride must fall, as the ebbing tide shall bring the lofty and the lowly to a level; that wealth and splendour have an artificial glare, and the tenure of dignity is precarious; that those the least prepared are hurled from the eminence which they called their own; that all are alike in presence of the Judge, who knows not partiality.

When religious controversies resolved into real persecution, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many individuals became the victims of ferocious zeal, according as their respective partizans happened to maintain the mastery. "I appeal thee before the tribunal seat of Christ Jesus!" exclaimed a martyr from the stake to his persecutor. The latter died a few days thereafter.† George Wishart, a Scottish priest, being accused of heresy, then a word employed by the contending parties to denote other opinions than those they professed, was condemned to be burnt at St. Andrews in the year 1546. The unhappy man predicted from amidst the flames,

* *Lipsius Monita et Exempla Politica*, lib. ii. cap. 11. This event is also referred to the year 1512.

† *Knor*, History of the Church of Scotland, p. 22, 23. ad an. 1527.

that Cardinal Beaton, an imperious ecclesiastic to whom he ascribed his fate, would meet an early, an inglorious death. His words came true; for the proud prelate, who was a spectator of the martyr's sufferings, was as treacherously murdered by the friends of the deceased, a short time subsequent, in a castle his ordinary dwelling, which might have defied an army, and his body was treated with indignity.* In the mysterious proceedings which involved the safety of Urban Grandier, a priest accused of sorcery in the year 1634, something that admits a similar construction is said to have happened. Alike unfortunate, he suffered for an alleged offence which he could not have committed; and he summoned father Lactantius, who had been the most instrumental in his persecution, to appear at the divine tribunal within a month. The persecutor died on the lapse of that time precisely.†

Allowing the truth of all these narratives, the unexpected concurrence between the fate of the oppressor and the sufferings of the afflicted, could not fail to strike the spectator with incredible awe. If

* *Lindsay*, *Chronicles of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 451. 482. The custom of adjuring to the divine tribunal was illustrated by Dr William Parry, who, accused of treason in 1583, "after sentence of death pronounced, he furiously cited the Queen Elizabeth to God's tribunal." *Baker*, p. 366.—In the persecutions at Lyons in 1793, one Basset, condemned by the Revolutionary tribunal, predicted the destruction of the Judges. *Delandine* *Les Prisons de Lyon*.

† *Pitaval Causes Celebres*, tom. ii. p. 272.

retributive justice be threatened by the divine ordinances, not only on the offender himself, but on succeeding generations, the fault must be expiated, it is not pardoned. Could we know the internal sensations of the flagitious, we should often discover their present punishment; and where postponed, it is not a trivial consolation for the defenceless to hear, "no doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live."

Surely retaliation is most just; and retaliation exactly in kind and quantity corresponding to the injury: Yet it is that which the injured often cannot obtain, and if offered, which he would be often compelled to decline. Sometimes it belongs to others to be the instruments of punishment when the aggrieved can be no longer their own defenders; and the guilty are forced to confess, that they have only met with their deserts. "But Adoni Bezek fled, and they pursued after him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes: and Adoni Bezek said, 'Threescore and ten kings having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table;' as I have done so hath God requited me."

Is it an allegory in profane history, where we are told of the treacherous perishing, not by the hands of those who had been betrayed, but by those of their enemies; as when the citadel of Rome was betrayed by Tarpeia, she was crushed to death under the golden bracelets or the shields of the Sa-

bines, which she had demanded for her reward? * But the cunning inherent to treachery commonly withdraws the traitor from the vengeance of his victim.

Although the injured be denied the power of retaliation, the injury does not always pass unrevengeed; other means are interposed to operate retributive justice when the offence is likely to slip out of memory. Timoleon was preserved from a conspiracy, owing to one of the conspirators being slain by a person unknown. But when the murderer, in defence, affirmed, that the conspirator had slain his father in the city of Leontium, all who heard him admired this wonderful interposition in combining the most remote incidents; and he was remunerated for having done a public service in saving Timoleon, while he avenged a private wrong. So we are told that Cæsar, the most remarkable man of his age, expecting to have dominion rivetted over the Roman nation, was decoyed to the senate house by Brutus, who had engaged a conspiracy to destroy him. "Pierced with many wounds, he fell on the pedestal of Pompey's statue and dyed it with his blood; so that Pompey seemed to preside over the work of vengeance, to tread his enemy under his feet, and enjoy his agonies." The conspirators gloried in their suc-

* *Livy*, lib. i. cap. 5. *Sextus Aurelius Victor* de Viris Illustribus Urbis Romæ, cap. 1.

cess, as if the caution of an unsuspecting friend could provide against treachery. "But the divine power which conducted him through life attended him after death as his avenger ; pursued and hunted out the assassins over sea and land, and rested not till there was not a man left either of those who dipped their hands in his blood, or of those who gave their sanction to the deed."* In the grand system of the universe, where years are as days amidst the infinity of time, and where boundless space is incommensurable, so do the guilty trust in vain to secrecy or distance. 'Though they contemplate nothing but their design, and rejoicing in its success, they look no farther, only an instant is occupied by them comparatively. If they be assailed by some unexpected reverse, or if some unseen calamity interrupts their busy career, and leads them to retrospect, they cannot hope, sooner or later, to escape being overtaken by retribution ; it is the reward of their actions. Many who have rioted in this life, despising justice and counsel, and holding all moral obligations in contempt, have trembled at the scene of futurity as it opened to their reflections. It is consistent with our confidence in protection, and as if exacted as a pledge for our safety, that the penalty due to atrocious offences should not be postponed. It is grateful to the injured to obtain instant vengeance on the injurer : the same

* *Plutarch* in vita Romuli ——— : in vita Cæsaris.

impression of justice is not received if it be not immediately consequent on their desire for retaliation. But they are not to demand the same proceeding in the interposition of divine authority as they are accustomed to behold on earth, from an arrogant opinion of what ought to be the attributes of divinity: nor should the oppressed abandon themselves to despair, and think they are forsaken of Heaven, because the oppressor may continue to riot yet a little longer, or crush them under his yoke. "When human affairs are so difficult to be understood by us, wherefore should we wonder if we cannot explain why the gods are earlier or later of inflicting punishment on the guilty?"*

Nevertheless our ordinary inclinations desire, that the relation between the punishment and an offence should be evident, and nearly approximated to its commission, if the effect is to be deep and lasting on mankind. If they are separated by generations and ages, or intermediate distance, the judgment seems for some other purposes than to benefit the contemporaries of the injury. That solemn appeal extorted by persecution, which called on the persecutor to justify himself before the divine tribunal, must have been more appalling than either law or conscience, when his decease was consecutive to the catastrophe. Other visitations sometimes seemed to convey retribution; such as that on an

* *Plutarch* de his qui sero a Numine puniuntur.

intolerant prelate, who prohibited translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue, and who was instrumental in the persecution of Sir John Oldcastle. "But mark the judgment that fell upon his own tongue, whose roots and blade shortly after, as it is recorded, grew so big in his mouth and throat, that he could neither speak nor swallow down meat, but in horror lay languishing till, at last starved of famine, he so died." * The pious and the credulous, perhaps even the impious, found such examples awful: and admitting that they might entertain conjectures on so difficult a subject, our ancestors held the obvious relation of two events as meant for human observation.

However hardily we shall adventure for ourselves, the dread of inducing evil on our posterity restrains iniquity; for the pain of our children is as distressing to us as our own. Still when the guilty deed is erased from the memory of men, when it might have been obliterated from the page of history, when all the agents have long passed away, the justice or the benefit of visiting the offence of the ancestor on the innocent who are yet to be born for the enjoyment of life, does not come within the sphere of common apprehension. Are not we entitled to plead that they alone who sin deserve punishment; and to ask if the innocent do not merit favour? If we are warned to shun evil and to do

* *Baker, Chronicle, p. 177.*

good, for deserts will be rewarded, shall we admit that the innocent can be doomed to suffer for what is not of their own doing, and that they shall be denied the recompense of their virtues? It seems hostile to reason, and a mockery of justice, to pronounce any one guilty who is not under his own free agency, or who was not in being at the date of the commission of a crime. The want of power or capacity, and mental alienation, are held a sufficient exculpation from all charges by the wise and equitable, who first enquire into the presence or absence of the accused. If one could not have been present, he could not have been guilty. But none of these conclusions were thought either suitable or satisfactory, in admitting that retribution affects posterity; for the fate of the descendant was ascribed to the conduct of the progenitor. No interval of time can be effectual in wiping off the fault. The judgment, though given, has been suspended. Thus Diodorus the Sicilian has not hesitated to ascribe the conflagration of the palace of Persepolis to retributive justice, inflicted for an offence a century and a half anterior to the incident: for he says, "it is to be particularly admired that the sacrilegious destruction of the citadel of Athens, by Xerxes, was avenged in the same manner, and after the lapse of so many years, by a courtesan of that city."* Are not the theological doctrines

* *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. xvii. § 72. tom. ii. p. 216.

of those eastern nations founded on corresponding principles, which ascribe all the sufferings endured by mortals in this life to the sins of a former existence? * We are making an atonement which is the same as undergoing retributive justice ; for both are the penalties of offence. Though centuries have passed away the fault is not forgiven ; it can be expiated only by the punishment of the progeny. Admitting it to be so, the reasons for postponement are far beyond the conjectures of human sagacity.

But it is not by any means unknown, that upright persons have ascribed some unexpected, and, as they thought, unmerited visitation on themselves to an offending progenitor. Unable to discover any immediate cause of their calamity, they referred it to one thus mysterious and remote. Nor is it unlikely that a gloomy or superstitious mind should seek such a solution of occurrences almost supernatural. It is related, that an officer of reputation in this country, having the command of a party of military appointed for the execution of a soldier, had privately received a reprieve for the culprit. About to announce it on the spot where preparations were

* *Abul Fazel Ayeen Akbery*, vol. iii. p. 167, 168. The Physicians of Hindostan affirm, that sickness originates from the animal constitution ; but those who are skilled in a certain mysterious art “ maintain it to be a punishment for crimes committed in a former state.” They refer specific complaints to specific offences ; as dumbness for having killed a sister, and pain in the eyes to having coveted another man’s wife.

made for carrying the sentence into effect, he accidentally dropped his handkerchief, which was followed by the discharge, for the party mistook it as the fatal signal, and the prisoner fell. The officer was deeply moved by the unfortunate event; he could not criminate himself, but he ascribed it to the participation of a progenitor in a treacherous massacre among the population of a district which has been already alluded to, and he retired from the service.

The progress of innumerable incidents perpetually in operation eludes the keenest scrutiny, and the nicest observation of mankind. Cause and effect are terms of the most familiar application, as if they were the most easily understood. But what we call the beginning and the end, perhaps, are only the course of fulfilling greater destinies; something in the necessary line or rotation of the important arrangements of the universe. Although we behold the flame ascending, the stone falling to the earth, or water dissolving in vapour, we can neither account for heat nor gravitation—we can do no more than offer an hypothesis regarding them. Yet solids or fluids are before us.

But the very means and implements which the traitor has employed in his nefarious work, seem to be sometimes retributively directed against himself, or he falls by the identical plot he has prepared for others. “Cassius, after he had lost the battle of Philippi, killed himself with the same dagger

which he had made use of against Cæsar.”* Calippus, a disciple of Plato, the friend of Dion, who overthrew the Syracusan government, had formed a conspiracy against his benefactor, but the traitor was slain with the same sword with which Dion “had been assassinated; for it was known by the size, being short like the Spartan swords, and by the curious workmanship;”† and Cherea, the tribune, who suffered for a praise-worthy deed, only because it was done perfidiously, was executed by his own desire, with “that very sword with which he himself slew Caligula.”‡

According to the universal balance which seems to pervade animated nature, equally opposing permanent excess and permanent defect, is it not likely that there should be means of destruction corresponding to those of preservation? There is a tendency from the visible origin to maturity; after which there is an unceasing tendency to extirpation; and existence is often abridged unexpectedly without the gradual progress of decay. If poison be deleterious, is it not likely that when prepared for one it may be death to another? Nay, that the mischief proposed may recoil on the proposer? He who dug the pit has been the first to fall into it: the plot was against mankind; it succeeded with-

* *Plutarch* in vita Cæsaris.

† *Athenæus*, lib. xi. cap. 119. *Plutarch* in vita Dionis—
De his qui sero a Numine puniuntur.

‡ *Josephus* Antiquitates Judæorum, lib. xix. c. 1. § 3.—c. 4.
§ 5.

out design. Thus were the snares of the Eastern princess fatal who, offering a poisoned cup to her son, was compelled to drink it herself—"sic victa regina scelere in se verso, veneno quod alii paraverat extinguitur." * Probably this has been of frequent occurrence, whether from accident or intention; for the resentment aroused by discovery of such an insidious stratagem, would find the most gratification in turning it against its contriver. Passion, besides, always vents itself by the readiest means. But retribution is more conspicuous where counteraction of the intended evil cannot be traced to human design: where the plotter becomes instrumental against himself by his own agency, and falls as if by his own hand. He desires to injure his neighbours; the mischief recoils on himself. In modern times, two iniquitous persons of exalted station, Pope Alexander VI. and his son Cæsar Borgia, ran a brilliant and successful career during a large portion of their lives. They consulted their personal pleasures and interests at the expense of their fellow-creatures, and profited of their power to be unjust. Designing to free themselves of a number of obnoxious persons at once, some of the cardinals were invited to an entertainment, where they were ordered to be served with poisoned wine. In the course of the day, however, the Pope being oppressed with heat, called

* *Justin*, lib. xxxix. cap. 2.—*Appian*, lib. Syrius.—Cleopatra, the mother of Antiochus VIII. king of Syria.

for a draught to refresh him, whereon he was supplied by an attendant, from certain flasks set apart as from the best, and thus unwittingly received the fatal beverage which had been prepared for the cardinals.*

The same means of destruction which have been used by the destroyer sometimes are applied to himself; as we read of De Vaurus the governor of Meaux, whose body was hung on a tree which he had often used for the execution of his prisoners, after the town was taken by King Henry V. of England, in 1422.†

But the credulity of superstitious persons has too rashly attempted to find reasons for an unlikely fate. Henry II. of France died of a wound which he received in the eye during a tournament; and the reformers did not hesitate to call this retribution, because he had vowed to oversee some of their number burnt on account of religion.‡

An obligation to preserve, and a prohibition to destroy, are universally felt, because all mankind

* *Gordon*, Lives of Pope Alexander VI. and Cæsar Borgia, ad an. 1503, p. 361.

† *Hume*, in his History of England, 1418—1422, comes to this conclusion, and quotes a writer whose work the author has not seen: but, according to *Monstrelet*, *Chronicles* by Johnes, ch. 144, vol. ii. p. 353, and *T. Livius Vita Henrici quinti*, p. 93, he was beheaded previously.

‡ *Le Laboureur* Addition aux Memoires de Castelnau, liv. i. ch. 4. tom. i. p. 352, 353.

are liable to be exposed to necessity and danger : and the vulgar are ready to conclude, that ingenuity is not justifiably displayed in the invention of the means of destruction. It is ascribed to divine retribution in punishing the contrivance of mischief should the inventors be the first to suffer ; and in support of their opinions they advance some impressive illustrations of an event so remote from all probability, and apparently removed from the usual course of human affairs. So of old, Perillus, a Grecian artist, is said to have fabricated a hollow brazen bull for the tyrant of Sicily destroying criminals by fire, and to have been himself the first to suffer by the intended punishment.* A tradition is reported to be current in Scotland, that an Earl of Morton, regent of that kingdom, who introduced a guillotine called the Maiden, was the first person beheaded by it in the year 1581. Two centuries later, in the same country, it is said that a celebrated artizan in Edinburgh suffered on what was contrived by himself for the execution of several persons at once.† In the reign of Richard II. it is related by the English chroniclers, that the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Nicholas Brember, being

* *Pliny* Historia Naturalis, lib. xxxiv. c. 18. § 32.

Et Phalaris tauro violenti membra Perilli

Torruit. Infelix auctor imbuit opus.

OVID. *De Arte Amandi*, v. 655.

† Visitors of the Scottish capital are shewn the former engine as a curiosity. The latter event occurred in the year 1788.

accused before Parliament, “ was brought to his answer, who being found guilty, was beheaded with an axe which himself had caused to be made for the beheading of others.”* Stephen Pasquier recalls the history of Haman to our recollection ; and he relates that there is a gibbet in Paris, called *Montfocon*, which proved particularly fatal to all who intermeddled with it: first, that Enguerraud de Marigny, superintendant of finances, by whom it was erected, suffered there in the year 1315; and Peter Remy, by whom it was repaired, underwent the same fate. †

It is written likewise in the French histories, that D'Aubriot, the founder of the Bastille, which has aided such measures of oppression, and has been the scene of so many miseries, was there imprisoned. ‡ Philip de Comines speaks feelingly, from his own experience of confinement in certain small wooden or iron cages, invented by a bishop of Verdun in the reign of Louis XI. who was the first to be imprisoned in them, during fourteen years. §

* *Baker*, Chronicle, p. 146. *Stow*, Summary, p. 152, 153.

† *Pasquier*, Recherches de la France, liv. viii. ch. 40. p. 585. 742. “ At length he was suspended from the gibbet which he had refitted, and as master of the place he had the honour of being elevated above all other robbers.” *Mezeray* Histoire de France, tom. ii. p. 354.

‡ *History of the Bastille*, p. 1.

§ *Comines* Memoires, lib. vi. cap. 12. p. 570. Edit. 1606.

So did our progenitors reason. If men apply themselves to the invention of tortures for the first who shall chance to prove offenders, certainly they have no guarantee against suffering by their own contrivance. There is a strong propensity in all countries, to subject experimentalists to their own experiments, either from malevolence, or really to ascertain their effects. Thence it is very probable that the mischief has frequently recoiled on the plotter : and that retributive justice has met the enemies of their race.

But had they lived in our æra, how confidently would they have argued on the work of retribution throughout the convulsions of the neighbouring kingdom,—where those who rose on the ruins of the state themselves perished by its downfall,—where those who plotted their overthrow quickly shared a similar fate,—where denouncers were denounced, and the toils which were artfully spread for others ensnared the conspirators ! But as wild beasts sometimes rage to devour each other, so when the leaders of sanguinary factions had reddened their native soil by the blood of their innocent countrymen, retribution overtook them ; they were dragged from the judgment-seat to justice, and died amidst execrations, as they had lived in abhorrence.

Those who violate the ties of nature, and infringe the rights of humanity, may justly dread retaliation of the injury ; and although they shall escape the indignation of their fellow-men for a season,

expiation of their offence may yet await them. Even where they are not overtaken by ostensible penalties, and are saved from human vengeance, nature is perhaps exacting atonement in self-reproach, and in the terrors of an accusing conscience, which conjuring up fiends in imagination, transform each object into a fancied foe, and “make them believe, like the parricide Bessus, that they hear the surrounding animals inveigh against their crime.” *

* *Plutarch de his qui sero a Numine puniuntur.*

CHAPTER VIII.

DISAPPOINTMENT RESULTS FROM IGNORANCE IN SUBLUNARY ARRANGEMENTS.

ALREADY have we advanced a little way smoothly and easily on the journey of life, indulging in present enjoyments, and speculating on futurity. We behold the harmonies of the universe preserved under perpetual changes, yet for ever undisturbed: we compute the periods and the places of the planetary spheres; we foresee the renovations of spring, and can tell the lengthening twilight, or fix unerringly the flux and reflux of the ocean. But at the moment of greatest confidence in any of all the events regarding ourselves, we find our plans frustrated.

We meditate and conclude, and firmly anticipate the issue of our expectations; they strengthen with renewal. But of all the evils haunting the human race, that of disappointment is of the most frequent recurrence. It is ever lurking under the wings of hope, clouds the fairest dawn, and wraps in gloomy night our fondest dreams of felicity.

If once overthrown we recover from the fall, it is not to stand more securely; for instantly is disappointment ready to cast us down again.

We are mortified, distressed, and confounded. Why should the bright images of our glowing fancy thus be obliterated? Why should our best and worthiest energies be causelessly defeated, and reverses always be prepared to darken our justest prospect of success?

To the contracted minds of mankind these seem inequitable dispensations, unsuitable to genuine desert, the violation of natural and moral rights, and as if sporting with their virtuous feelings. They see that they need not try to fortify themselves against the invasions of disappointment; for there are no circumstances nor any condition exempted from it. In infancy it visits us, we are accompanied by it in adolescence, it pursues us through manhood, and awaits the drooping of venerable age.

Nevertheless, if we enquire more profoundly into the source of this invasion of peace, so inseparable from human existence, perhaps it will be found principally chargeable to ourselves: that it originates in our ignorance of futurity, and resides in the errors of judgment: that we do wrong in applying to our private transient and artificial state, the general regulations beheld in the government of the universe.

All unexpected results follow mistaken anticipations. If presuming on our penetration, we strive to avert disappointment in prediction, it is from reasoning on experience that we succeed. The times past read useful lectures for present obser-

servation : If we would look to what shall be, let us consider what has been.

The happiness of the animated world stands foremost in the beneficent designs which are ascribed to Providence : for all the provisions of nature tend to good. Men therefore think themselves entitled to contemplate their own interests favourably. They couple with the purposes of their being the objects of their wishes, embellished by grateful colouring : they reduce to substantial forms the floating visions of a heated imagination : they construe doubts and conjectures into realities : they expect, because they desire. But the foundation is fallacy : the fairy edifice totters, the equipoise is lost, truth turns the balance and preponderates in frustration. We discover that we have been busy in deceiving ourselves.

Such is the result of most of the speculations which mankind entertain, and most of the transactions wherein they engage.

Let us beware, however, of overcharging this clouded picture. From what has been already said, and from the remarks which have yet to come, such a tissue of contrarieties, and such repeated vexations as those that are incident to human nature, would seem too heavy a load for the strongest. Disappointment is incessant, indeed : but it will be well to examine if it be always a calamity—if it be always of permanent prejudice—never profitable.

Disappointment, certainly, is a state of suffering, it is grief, and that state of suffering is often renewed.

It is not the object of these observations to inculcate a system of optimism, though undoubtedly the general purport of what we venture to design universal harmonies, seems to have such a tendency. The frustration of what at one time absorbed our deepest attention, of that which seemingly involved our dearest interests, and inflicting a grievous wound at the moment converted joy to sorrow, may prove beneficial in the end. How often, when under the influence of violent passions, subduing reason, spurning control, and despising salutary counsel, do we center our sole desire and ambition in the attainment of some single object ! We are frustrated—we rave in the bitterness of disappointment—reproaching fortune, reproaching mankind, reproaching ourselves. “ Is it not beyond endurance,” we exclaim, “ to be foiled ?—to have aimed only at what was so justifiable ; to have set our affections on what promised such felicity ; to be so nearly within our grasp, yet to be disappointed of all ? None can be alike unfortunate,—none so miserable !” A short season intervenes, however : the vehemence of our emotions begins to subside. The object previously ever present, is but occasionally revived ; and we come, by progressive degrees, to behold it more calmly. Formerly it was seen under only one, and that the fairest aspect : Now do different lights obtrude themselves. Comparing them together, each is not alluring or brilliant ; and in finding it so, we are compelled to allow that it is better we have been frustrated.

We are disposed, in the ordinary transactions of life, to pursue matters of little import with unsuitable ardour ; and we feel mortified by being baulked of our expectations. Disappointment results from ourselves, because we have held a false estimate of the probabilities of events, and it is the more severe as we have calculated on their certainty. Sometimes trusting to our personal abilities, they prove unequal to the task, or we discover, from undoubted failure, that our confidence has exceeded our intellectual energies. If spared the shame of public disclosure, we be humbled to a proper sense of our actual powers, they may be still improved, and perseverance may crown our renewed endeavours with success ; if otherwise, the secret had better remain our own.

Short experience of the world lays us open to reiterated disgust, where we hope for all that is fair and pleasing. Our proffered affections are spurned ; our useful benefactions are eagerly received, yet basely requited. A chilling indifference not only checks our solicitude, but our feelings are wounded by studied neglect. Almost as often as mankind can reap the conscious enjoyment of good actions, are they pained by seeing them speedily forgot. Though we are right, we are put in the wrong.

Where every being subsists for itself, and takes advantage of the simple provisions of nature, possibly all the objects of desire are nearly within its compass. It is quitting this condition, that incurs such a multitude of inconveniences. The

more that our concerns are enlarged, the more numerous our connections, we ought to lay our account with the more frequent disappointments. Is it not obvious, that the fewer the wants, the wishes, and expectations of mankind, they are less in danger of frustrations? Hence may those, who are said to have none, enjoy content. But this, according to the common constitution of the world, is too artificial a state.

How shall we attempt to frame order out of the series of disappointments, for assuredly among themselves there is none. We know, however, that as they are dependent either on sensations or pursuits, those persons in whom the former are obtuse must suffer less severely, and that those who circumscribe the latter have privileged exemptions. In proportion to our ardour we feel: according as we dwell intently on expectation, or encourage love by indulgence, so is frustration by disappointment or privation rendered more bitter. But the passions, it has been already affirmed, are not within human controul, unless in their lower excitement: nor are they of our own proper choice; for Nature, to fulfil the greatness of her purposes, has rendered us involuntarily subservient to them. Yet contemplated disappointment cannot enter any of her plans thus to counteract the objects proposed: frustration must chiefly originate from the works of mankind.

As the youthful faculties unfold, a void still re-

mains in the heart to be occupied by the objects who have been created for each other. It is not for either to name them : they are pointed out by an inexplicable sympathy, which cannot be referred to any solitary or unalterable principle. A reciprocal attraction unites them, strengthening with indulgence, distilling a delicious poison through the veins, which benumbs their most active intellectual energies. The delusion is encouraged, because it is delightful : a word or a look is sufficient to recall the wanderer. A kind of delirium has taken possession of the soul, dissolving it in pleasure, robing an idol in beauty and innocence, enshrining it in purity.

But while vows are offered up on the altar of fidelity, while bound in fascination's firmest spells, the darkness of disappointment envelopes all the promised joys of mortals, shrouds them for ever from our participation, wrests the idol of adoration from our embrace.

We may strive to bear the loss of those endeared to us with resignation. If their earthly course be closed, we are comforted in the confidence that they enjoy a celestial paradise, where kindred spirits shall meet. But to see another cull the flower whose fragrance was so sweet, to see another reap the fruit whose ripening we had fondly watched to call our own ; to be sundered and to remain, opens an everlasting wound to bleed in the sorrow of separation.

Mankind may disguise their feelings to speak or write indifferently of this mysterious union of our etherial portion, or they may trust to insensibility ; but if Nature bids passion glow, it glows.

Hence to witness this ensnaring charm, changing mortals from themselves, may it not be credited that Leander swam the Hellespont to Hero, or that Hero dashed amidst the waves that engulphed Leander,—that appalling perils have been contemned for a crown of laurel to immortalize the brave in the sight of one alone for whom life was deemed worthy of enjoyment ?

So, when allured by specious hope, the ardent passions are cheated into surety, bitter disappointment prepares for the ravages of despair.*

Next, let us advance yet another step to review those sensations succeeding the delirious enthrallment, when the subsiding tumult restores the equilibrium of the bewildered soul. Possession, perhaps that sole purpose which permitted no intermediate distance, nor any intermediate object to interpose between our wishes and the favoured being, has been attained—the flame is quenched—the torch extinguished. Retiring mists disclose to the astonished view, that they have falsified what in all sincerity was received as veracious: that they have decked out an image void of excellence,

* *Pomponius Mela*, lib. ii. cap. 2. "Sestos is opposite to Abydos, celebrated for the love of Leander."

but for the clothing of fancy's artificial apparel, that they had spell-bound our reason. Grievous disappointment discovers that the single being so well beloved and cherished, in whom were ultimately centered our dearest expectations, now proves so unlike the idol of adoration, that we are almost inclined to distrust the identity of both, and tremble lest a surreptitious substitution has been offered in imposture. That beauty, which seen at intervals, and exaggerated in recollection, kindled the warmest emotions, for its owner was lovely, now become too familiar, loses all its interest. Mental ornaments, ever renovating in varied embellishment, are wanting to supply the vacancy left by its recent fascinations. Perhaps enlarging the field of observation, the smiles of sweetness seem less engaging: we may find impatience displacing placidity, a frown occasionally gathering to occupy the playfulness of vivacity ever present when flattery pleaded—obduracy resisting persuasion. The Graces have fled—Short-sighted mortals!—Again, on the other hand, does one who was entitled to expect unfading tenderness soon meet cold indifference; qualities truly precious have failed to preserve their just impression: a harsh reply is ready for solicitude, benignity and kindness are received by some stern rebuke. There is neither seeking to please nor desire to be satisfied. Humility fosters usurpations; haughtiness would exact needless compliance, but compliance is unproductive of peace. He who should re-

main amidst the pleasures of domestic concord, wanders abroad in licentiousness. All the blessings, the virtues, the delights of the ideal vision vanish under the cooling hand of time and reason's scrutiny, which, but for the seductions of passion, would have discovered true deformities. Transient enjoyment, therefore, rather the anticipation of happiness, closes in the gloom of discontent, bred by unforeseen disappointment.

Hence do those distastes ensue, which often renewed at last grow into incurable disgust, heightened perhaps by the indissolubility of the bond under which two such adverse dispositions are united. The sooner it is sundered the better: quiet is the first and greatest enjoyment, the harbinger of content and happiness: nor ought we imprudently to await the close of aggravated exasperation, as has been beheld too often, in some sad catastrophe.

Ignorance of futurity, ignorance of character, and above all the influence of overweening passion, contribute to such disappointments. The human race know little of each other untried: a powerful reason for endeavouring to produce uniformity of sentiment from uniformity of education. Domestic infelicities may exceed endurance. "Wretch that I am!" cries Pasquier, "that I, a lover of universal peace, should be obliged to seek it from preserving perpetual war." Two persons of the highest rank in this country were obliged to separate from incongruity of temper, after their union had subsisted

forty-four years : and Elias Bennet, a meek ecclesiastic, at the age of eighty-eight, feelingly describes the anxieties attendant on one which had continued forty-seven.* It is said that Sir Thomas More strove to mollify the disposition of his partner, by persuading her to play on the lute daily.† Even Henry IV. the absolute monarch of a great nation, the idol of the French people, could not refrain from contrasting the qualities of his mistresses with the defects of his queen, in confidential complaints to the favourite minister Sully. “ I find none of all these at home ; I have neither society, amusement, nor satisfaction from the queen : She has no complaisance nor suavity : she does not accommodate herself in any respect to my humour or my inclinations. When returning from abroad I begin to speak familiarly or wish to caress her, she gives me so cold a reception that I am obliged to forsake her in disgust, and to seek consolation elsewhere.”‡ The celebrated Albert Durer is said to have died of chagrin for domestic infelicities. These and a number of similar anecdotes are related : but were we

* Uxor, avara, procax, jurgiosa, inconstans et varia indefessa contradicendi libidine, per annos 47 miserum conjugium omnibus diris affecit.

† Is this fact beyond dispute? The object of his first choice, whom Erasmus says “ he had well instructed in every kind of music,” seems to have been of an amiable character. His second was quite the reverse, old and covetous. *Roper, Life of Sir Thomas More.*

‡ *Sully, Memoires*, liv. xvii. t. iii. p. 464.

permitted to penetrate the interior of conjugal life, and lay open its circumstances, how many more could be told of the imperious exactions of men—for it is remarkable, and certainly from the falsest view of facts, that fewer of the regrets of the female sex have been commemorated. Then we should behold them vitiated by luxury and sensuality, swelling with empty pride, greedily listening to flattery, prone to anger, frantic with jealousy, impatient of casualties, wreaking their spleen on their weaker and submissive help-mates,—claiming the privilege of petty tyrants, to be cruel because they are strong.

Among the causes of discontent invading connubial comfort, none is more frequent than disappointment of progeny. Yet may it not be questioned, whether we should boldly tax heaven for refusing this as a desirable dispensation, whether the privation of offspring be truly a calamity. “Children sweeten labours, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death.” *

On the one hand it is justly said, that enjoyment of our offspring is the purest of pleasures; that they are a second self in whom we hope our honour is to be renewed; that they are to be a never-failing fountain of satisfaction; that they will crown our grey hairs with glory; that they will close our eyes in peace.

* *Bacon, Essays, § 7.*

But on the other hand may we not argue, that our condition being artificial, our pains outnumber our pleasures; that our sources of regret are multiplied by the extension of kindred, and our sensations rendered more acute by the nearness of blood? Our credit in a social state is dependent on the will and conduct of those with whom our connections subsist: Wounds to them are wounds to ourselves. Nay, have not many felt with anguish that their honour is partly in their keeping? We think the bond is always binding: if not dissolved, it is imperceptibly enfeebled: and as the relations of those who are nearest to us augment in number, so does the tie with ourselves become more slender. How tender is the affection of the parent to the child, and to the offspring of the child! but the same veneration cannot return from that offspring as from the child itself. Like multifarious friendships, the more remote and numerous the relatives, the less the kindred love. Could one concentrate his wishes to objects of personal attainment only, could he divest himself of all external relations with his fellow-creatures, would he not be devoid of the cares whereof both are productive? He grasps at nothing beyond his reach: the intercourse of the world does not load him with chagrin; without living in solitude, his principal apprehension must be of the personal suffering incident to humanity. The fewer connections, therefore, the fewer cares.

Yet we are not permitted to reason so by the

laws uniting us to the universe. A numerous progeny is conceived the evidence of divine favour, and sterility has been deprecated as a curse. "Give me children else I die!" exclaimed the patriarch's afflicted consort, in the bitterness of her disappointment. Generations succeeding generations, as the sand of the shores, to fill the world, are the invariable promise of holy writ. Mankind have always languished for posterity.

Nevertheless, from the moment of birth, does not an infant become the object of solicitude? The pleasures of paternity are intermingled with anxiety and compassion: There is pain in its sighs and its tears: we suffer in its sufferings: all the maladies of infancy, long forgot in ourselves, are renovated in the distress of beings to whom we are so tenderly united. While the enraptured mother hangs over the playful smiles of her darling innocent, might not she be warned to moderate her transports; might not she be reminded that the infantile features whereon she doats, would be ungraceful in manhood, that she herself would desire the change; that the intellect is not yet evolved which is to claim esteem and admiration? None of these things are seen by the fond parent: supremely blessed, she folds this image of herself in her warm embrace. She is content,—it is her all.

Parental anxieties are not abated with the progress of years. Independent of our interest in the attainments and growing importance of our chil-

dren; their conduct soon begins to be reflected on ourselves. But, meantime that the first pledge of connubial love is advancing, the sensations felt in its existence are awakened by a second, then by a third, perhaps by a numerous offspring. This rapid accession cannot but arouse our notice to present circumstances, probably even to future prospects; for fortune is for the most part sparingly distributed. A poor man's children are proverbially called his riches. They are sent to comfort their parents, indeed; but that they are their riches, though literally true elsewhere, becomes metaphorical in the western world. Here, where so vast a proportion of the people have only scanty means, it is chiefly with the rich that a joyful dispensation can be hailed in a numerous progeny. But there are few whose wealth keeps pace with the enlargement of their family; and although parental love may disguise retrenchments necessary for one or two, when that which could not well be spared is shared to many, its slenderness speaks intelligibly. Nor is it in subsistence alone that what we have is to be bestowed. In the artificial state we occupy, our children must resemble those who are like ourselves; all that is incident to our condition in society must be devoted to their use. The fortune originally ample, is curtailed by its distribution. Our first retrenchment in luxury is little regretted; next comes the restriction of comforts; and lastly, privations affecting our necessities. Nature and duty

bid us bear it, for it is right ; nor do we repine at the loss of what is taken from ourselves to be conferred on our cherished offspring.

Still are there other successive epochs ; and first, the outset of children in life, one which surely is not to be held of minor solicitude, compared with the state of infancy or adolescence. It is neither the mere enjoyment of personal vigour, nor the possession of wealth, that constitutes their welfare. The good opinion of the world, the fulfilment of reasonable expectations, the success of laudable undertakings, are all involved. Singly or combined, their felicity is dependant upon them.

“ It is a grievous thing for a father to see the flower of his daughter’s youth passing fruitlessly away for want of a dower,” said an ancient philosopher.* Existence mis-spent is always grievous ; and it is alike painful to witness the waste of intellectual energy in the one, or to behold the waning charms of the other more interesting portion of our race decay without fulfilment of what seems the allotted purpose of either. But the latter is an evil widely spread in Britain : for human institutions unwittingly counteract the declarations of Nature. Perhaps not less than half a million of her daughters must ever remain unaffianced and in celibacy ; a penalty chiefly resulting from the circumstances of the social condition, and thus disappointing the

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. v. § 35, in vita Lyconis.

general plans for universal good. Yet it is one which must be submitted to in patience; for it is not within the limits of remedy. We aggravate it indiscreetly by promoting luxury, and an absurd rivalry in splendour, whereby the numerous families who have to complain are sunk still lower under the pressure.*

All the different incidents befalling children are participated by the feeling parents. As they sorrowed for the sufferings of infancy, they rejoice in the joys of adolescence, and grieve in the grief of maturity. Each vicissitude brings its pang or its pleasure. Every one cannot be distinguished by success, otherwise the world would be too small a

* Probably the number of females between 15 and 35, who must always remain single in the British islands, is not over-rated. It results from several causes. Many of the males, nearly of a parity in age and condition, leave the country without returning: Many are deterred by the difficulties of subsistence, from entering into the connubial state. But among the higher ranks, it is chiefly from the inequality of condition between the sons of a family, their necessity of adventuring forth in life, and inability to retire before the advances of age have chilled the passions. The number of females also in the British islands considerably exceeds that of males. The number of surviving females between 15 and 40, amounts to 2,501,812. In France, the proportion of living females to males is as 34 to 33: *Peuchet* Statistique Elementaire, p. 241, 242. It is not so in all countries; for in Mexico the proportion of men to women is as 100 to 95: *Humboldt* Essai Statistique sur la Nouvelle Espagne, p. 138. In some Eastern countries, where it is the custom to form a union between one woman, and two or even several men, the male population is supposed to be superabundant.

sphere for action : wealth and renown are estimated according to their rarity. Besides, none but the fortunate among men are summoned into notice : the successful and disappointed sink into oblivion, unless the extent of their calamities shall rescue them from it. The glory of our children reflects its lustre on our name : we proudly reap the harvest of our early precepts : it is seen that we have twined the pliant shoot in virtue. But, alas ! the disgrace of the child is a deadly wound to the parent, far more deadly than the disgrace of the parent to the child. In the common course of nature, the parent dies and is forgot ; but unless a premature fate shall abridge its span, the existence of the child is protracted as an eternal reproach on the authors of its being.

In vain do we hope that our children shall close our eyes. Our enjoyment of their society belongs only to the earliest term of adolescence : it is profitable to them, and perhaps for ourselves, that they should be severed from us. Those patriarchal ages are past, when families grew grey and were renewed under a common roof. We are glad to send our offspring to seek the benefits of a distant shore. They may return, indeed ; but it is the will of Providence that many, that a large proportion, of those ushered into life, shall be called away even before their parents' race is run.

Could we interrupt the train of these reflections, it would be to brighten the shade, to reverse the

picture. Then should we be delighted with beholding the tender affection uniting a virtuous pair rivetted by a blooming progeny; gladly witnessing their rising reputation, and flourishing enterprises, followed by the approbation of the world. Upright conduct, courteous demeanour, a manly and patriotic independence, have obtained them a celebrated name. If dwelling in their society, they receive that first duty due by us, homage and veneration: if separated, they are comforted by their return to soften the infirmities of declining age. At last, when their years are full, they are content to quit this transitory scene, satisfied with the past, and eager in the expectation that their own virtues, imparted to their children, shall descend to later posterity.

Yet all this is only a gleam of sunshine: it is the best but the least frequent arrangement of the affairs of mankind. If we enlarge our views, it is to comprehend those obstructions ever prepared to meet the most reasonable expectations, not to exclude them. Perhaps these are the necessary consequences of subsistence on the earth; they are part of the necessary dispensations to mortals. We must be sundered from our children; for limited space is as inconsistent with extending action as with continual increase. Long ago, one of the most illustrious philosophers, whose precepts and observations have illumined the world, too justly remarked, "With respect to children, many men will

be found who pray for them; but after having them, are brought on that very account into the greatest calamities. For some whose children were incorrigible, have spent all their after days in sorrow; and some who had good children, but lost them by evil accident, have been reduced to a state of mind no less distressing; and, like the others, have wished that their children never had been born.* Let not the sterile, therefore, bewail the want of offspring—let them not hastily reproach Providence with having denied them what they may deem a blessing: Perhaps the joys of expectation would not be realized, or they might be so transient that they could be scarcely called a benefit.

Such are some of the arguments that might weaken the anticipations of happiness, to be derived from the simple existence of progeny.

In the next place, we may glance at what is denominated the outset of life, those beginnings to conduct us to future prosperity, wherein, after the acquisitions belonging to adolescence, we are compelled to rest on ourselves and on fortune. If our lot be merely to inherit the possessions of our fathers, the line is not difficult to be drawn. A fair and honourable conduct, embellished by munificence, courtesy, sincerity, independence, patriotism, and magnanimity of sentiment, will go far to purchase the public

* *Plato, Alcibiades Secundus.*

esteem and private tranquillity. We shall not be exposed to remarkable hazards from the contrarieties of men, unless the want of prudence be productive of disappointments. In so far as important considerations extend, we are enabled to offer rather than to ask; our anticipations are not so liable to be defeated; if we can guard against the bad, we may expect the countenance of the good. This is a condition, however, which does not fall to many: nine-tenths, or a larger proportion of society, must embark in pursuits, promising fame or profit: they must enter on a tedious journey, whose termination is lost in time and distance. How many are the roads which our expectation opens? They are innumerable. But travelling the shortest way on each, leads to a labyrinth, or shews its environing shoals and quicksands. Examples would be superfluous: they will occur to every reflecting person.

But let us instance one ushered into the practice of a profession, where learning and ingenuity are valued, and in the attainment of which he has ardently occupied his best hours and seasons. His mind is enlarged by study, invigorated by contemplation, while converse with ancient and modern philosophers contributes to the purity of his morals, and the refinement of his taste. Now he buoys himself up with the hope of notice; nay, he feels a kind of confidence, that, from the possession of unaffected knowledge, and his constant assiduity, some distinction will not be refused him. Even a

little would be grateful to cheer his anxious moments : it would relieve his unremitting labour, and reward his industry. The pause of expectation follows.—Again he resumes his studies ; believing that mental improvement never can be overdone. Though much has been already gained, he still finds room for more : and still do verdant fields, refreshed by the limpid springs of learning, invite expanding genius to cull their flowers. Perseverance to him is pleasure. But having increased his stores, and beginning to withdraw from enquiries so recondite, to look around to mankind, he beholds that some among them, whose qualities are not shining, whose acquisitions are fewer, whose diligence has been less, are more caressed and distinguished than himself. They seem chosen while he is neglected : they seem to bask in the sunshine of fortune, while he is allowed to remain in the shade. He takes the slight with patient endurance, and meditatively searches after its cause. Is it that he is not yet sufficiently disciplined in knowledge ; because he is not qualified in himself for obtaining eminence from want of moral conduct ; is it because he has not the support of those who called themselves trusty, and whom he credited to be his friends ; or has he displeased the public, which he is so willing to serve ? The bitter truth is forced upon him. It is not his want of talent, but the rarity of men capable of its due appreciation : neither is it his deficiency in erudition, for a scantier share has proved enough to his

successful rivals. But coming to scrutinize the conduct of expected friends, he finds them lukewarm towards him ; and notwithstanding some were true, while his enthusiasm drank deep of the streams of Helicon, many were pleasing themselves in meaner patronage. Conviction at last admonishes him, so emulous and aspiring, that he has pursued a slippery path, refrigerating as it advances, beset by treachery: that although he has reached the goal, another receives the prize. He is supplanted : he is undone. He shrinks from the presence of society, overwhelmed with mortification and disgust.

But this is not the work of a day—years have elapsed, and only by their revolution have they brought the certainty to light. He whose heart once beat high with hope, whose brilliant genius fostering indulgence would have elevated to irradiate the world, has grown hoary in disappointment.

Most fortunate is the man whose penetration discovers the truth in time, and who can avail himself of the disclosure, otherwise life might have been wasted in fruitless expectation.

Perhaps in this class of mankind it is chiefly the meritorious who have to encounter the frowns of fortune ; because while the presumptuous are rudely thrusting them aside, they cannot summon confidence to offer themselves to notice. Men of real talent are seldom obtrusive, they consider their own powers with distrust, while the others entertain no doubts about themselves—making up in arrogance what is

deficient in quality; if drawn forth from obscurity, should it not be by some friendly hand, they commonly owe it to chance. But those courting notoriety, allure the vulgar, impose on the ignorant, and dazzle the weak; "for most part of the public esteem brilliance above solidity, from being attracted more by what affects the senses than the understanding."* Thus an analysis by genuine learning, taste, and feeling, will resolve the claims of the confident into gaudy and superficial ornament, which, if not deserving contempt, ought to give small pretensions to desert. Nevertheless lower talents succeed from being adequate to the service required: None have prospered so well as the resolute; the timid caution, the diffident advances of genius, enable audacity to start before it, and boldly carry off the prize. Thus do we sometimes behold the greater share of public patronage dispensed to those who have not conferred any obligations on the public, nor are qualified to do so; and thus is the modest man of merit chagrined to find those whose deserts were never told preferred to himself.

May it be permitted to touch on another topic somewhat analogous and equally common—the disappointment of literary reputation. Almost the entire mass of the better ranks in European countries enter on the cultivation of letters, as necessarily flowing from the higher branches of education.

* *Malebranche*, Recherche de la Verité, lib. ii. cap. 5.

A certain acquaintance with history and philosophy, together with some knowledge of the arts and sciences, are requisite, not only in very ordinary departments in life, but for enabling them to fill their political stations creditably; because the charge of framing ordinances for the public weal, their due construction and application, and the duty of minutely watching the result of foreign and domestic measures, is peculiarly their province. Thence it is of much importance that their literary attainments shall facilitate invention, as well as govern the exercise of judgment. But not to speak of mere professional acquisitions, the majority seldom preserve such objects specially in the contemplation of their studies: they are taking wide and unfettered excursions into all the unknown regions, whether they are transported by curiosity or imagination,—whence their solidity becomes questionable. No sooner are we masters of a very moderate share of learning, than we are assailed by a restless anxiety to impart our skill to others, and sometimes mistakingly presume on their ignorance. This eager desire of displaying our supposed abilities, generally prevents us from turning them to the best advantage: for occupied in exposing what we have, we neglect opportunities of acquiring what we want—a useful caveat to the enthusiasm of youthful genius. Those who are gifted with profound erudition, however, repeatedly find that their attainments are either of another description than what

are in general esteem, or that they are suited to the comprehension of only a small portion of the public: they have not discovered the essential difference between theoretical and practical learning: that pure and refined speculations require the admiration of a similar taste and talent, which is not lavishly dispensed by nature;—for elevated minds in their ardour quit the objects of common reach to soar where few can follow them. Hence the most erudite productions have fallen into immediate oblivion, or rather their merits never were disclosed. During the survivance of the author, he has had to suffer the neglect of his less skilful contemporaries; and if fashion altered, it has been reserved for posterity to redeem his fame. Perhaps he is overtaken by a torrent of vituperation, wilfully and wickedly misinterpreting his worthiest designs. Mortified and abashed, he dreads that he has done something wrong, that he has erred in his choice, and disappointed the public expectation: he repents having adventured so far, yet he feels that this is not the season to retreat. But he has much to learn: he has to study the sentiments, the opinions, and prejudices of the world: he has chiefly to humour the tastes, the weaknesses, and the volatileness of men. Perhaps in the moment of his adversity, he witnesses his fellows earnestly engaged with some ephemeral, superficial, uncouth, or vulgar production, as if it were extending science, or morals, or history, though corresponding only to the want of reflection and

degradation of literature. Subjects easily mastered are preferred to difficulties : therefore tolerable discussions or common-place topics, writings which dispense with calling on the stretch of thought, those calculated merely for amusement and not instruction, always will attract greater notice. Though satiated with commentary, or what is familiar, we hesitate about entering on what is beneficially new ; and its ablest exposition, unless brought down to the capacity of enervated intellect, will remain in imminent hazard of being disregarded. If we would acquire information, we must labour in solitude. But we are much addicted to society. Our general associations, now making deep inroads on the time which was wont to be devoted to contemplation, are for entertainment exclusively. We never meet for the purpose of grave investigation or discussion, or to compare our respective opinions ;—this would be inconsistent with the growing levity of the age : and indeed the rapid succession, and the diversity of the external objects incessantly offering themselves, would soon disturb such intentions. No one is insensible that the merits of some comedian, perhaps, engrosses much of the transient communications of society : all can tell whether they were diverted by his performance : they judge whether his imitation was perfect ; whether he only made approaches to nature ; or if his part was overdone : Nor do they feel it a harder task in recalling the last new romance, in enumerating the qualities of the cha-

racters, describing the structure of tales, or the imagery of poetic fables. It may be they advance to some of those modern biographies, wherein the whole history of whole countries is swallowed up, from the opportunity of incorporating it with the name of an individual. But how can the learned expect a discourse on the properties of their works—how can they hope for the circulation of their excellence, by conversation? People feel reluctant to canvass subjects either demanding much instant reflection, or with which they are not intimately acquainted. The one is troublesome: our vanity forbids the other, lest we should appear ignorant—a truth which many stratagems are at work to conceal. So are trite and ordinary topics chosen; for they prove most acceptable: learning must be introduced by stealth, for we are disposed to think superficially. Trifles rise to importance in our eyes, because our understanding itself rises no higher. The most erudite, therefore, must not always ascribe the neglect of their productions to their own failure; but sometimes to the want, we should call it, of public interest in that peculiar department of literature which they have selected. Those, also, bestowing indefatigable labour on a favourite subject, are prone to persuade themselves that all the world are alike devoted to it. Thence they become insensible that it is actually devoid of attraction, and are mortified at its natural fate. Others assuming topics of real importance, prove deficient in

the art of discussing them agreeably, and are as much dissatisfied as the former with the reception of their works. Both these classes may be sufficiently learned, yet both must experience inevitable disappointment. Those desiring information, and whom they specially address, are greatly indebted to them ; but their numbers are too limited to extend their reputation, and support them by applause. It is not uncommon for mankind altogether to mistake the proper bent of their talents, attempting enterprises wherein they are not fitted to excel. Whoever has been once successful, should beware of a second adventure. After the longest enjoyment of literary reputation, Chapelain, an author now forgot, lost his good name in a single day, from bringing forward a poem which had occupied him twenty years. Sometimes, sudden caprice, either of partiality or distaste, animates the public ; and those unfortunate in their early essays, like the most favoured children of Thespis, have lived to attain unequivocal celebrity.* Peculiar religious or political tenets, may prove fatal to excellent works, from being held unpardonable blemishes by their adversaries. They invite a host of censors to their condemnation ; and it is then amusing to the tranquil spectator to witness the ardour on either side.

* Moliere was pelted from the stage on his first appearance in tragedy ; and the reception of Mrs Siddons was so ungracious, that it is said her friends could hardly induce her to return.

Treatises of little real pretension are often greatly celebrated, from novelty in style more than novelty in matter ; the flimsy veil concealing their imperfections, remains for want of discrimination. But repeated examples shew, that compositions filling every mouth to-day, may pass into irrecoverable oblivion to-morrow, as if immediate conviction of the absurdity of giving them praise should naturally follow.— Though confined to that narrow circle truly desirous of obtaining knowledge, writings of intrinsic worth, if they can make their way, will remain for future generations. Stability seems denied to the offspring of precipitation ; nor can it be expected that venal literature, the great reproach of modern times, shall survive its own æra : the most exalted patronage cannot avert its fate. The prime minister of a foreign nation neglected good historians to recompense indifferent poets, none of whose verses have descended to posterity. Thus also many productions which ignorance, prejudice, and especially defective taste, are now supporting, will quietly sink into oblivion, for the pillars whereon they rest are rotten. Let us behold the progressive advances of genius, and we must then allow that genius is there. But in sameness there is none.

Nevertheless, the disappointment of literary reputation, and the misfortunes of those pursuing after it, are often chargeable personally to themselves. Men devoted to letters, while improving the mind, forget to polish the manners, and, under a rough

exterior, sometimes seem to think they may dispense with rendering themselves amiable. They put too high an estimation on merely the literary character. Retiring to seclusion, all the peculiarities incident to persons who shun society are contracted ; they become ignorant of the real social relations of mankind, and unfitted for the ordinary occupations and intercourse of life. The attention of the truly learned is entirely withdrawn from the world : they know little of what is passing around them. While forgetting their own personal interests, they are irritated, perhaps, by the corresponding neglect of their neighbours. Profoundly intent on the subjects of their enquiry, interruptions prove irksome ; they grow indolent, capricious, or dogmatic, and acquire an inflexibility of temper as little calculated to acquire them new friends, as to preserve the old.*

Wealth and genuine erudition have been scarcely ever combined. It would be hard to say that they are incompatible : but many of the learned have lived in penury, and died in wretchedness. Nor although they be esteemed, is it often judged expedient to recompense them during their survival for their writings farther than by estimation.

Youthful ardour cannot foresee repulse and dis-

* Isaac Vossius was so much engaged in investigating the manners of ancient ages, that he knew nothing of those of his own.—The celebrated Dr Hooke is said to have frequently sat day and night at his table in later life, without undressing himself and going to bed. *Ward, Lives of the Professors of Gresham College*, p. 187.

appointment. Embarking on the sea of literary adventure, without having fathomed its troubled waters, we enter on a tempestuous voyage, and if we do not altogether perish, we are often warned of our precipitation by bitter draughts of dear bought experience. Sensibility, refined by the nature of their pursuits, has aggravated the sufferings of many worthy individuals. Some have regarded their premature compositions with infinite regret, as so many delinquencies of youth : Some have beheld their own sentiments, once the most warmly espoused, with abhorrence ; and they have blushed for the effusions of a lively imagination, which were cherished as they sprung with a conscious pride in having given them being. Yet those who are endowed with enthusiasm, and have had perseverance to climb Parnassus, must not allow themselves to be easily discouraged. Though blemishes stain the fruits of their earlier labours, and censure wound their unguarded opinions, candour will allow them to correct themselves ; for the skill of the mechanic must be judged by the latest improvement, not by the original imperfection of his machine, and the delicacy of the painter by the latest touches of his art. They will enjoy a gratifying retrospect by observing their own progressive advances ; and thus may the efforts of genius be ultimately crowned by success and reputation. But they must be armed at the same time with ample fortitude ; for, notwithstanding literature be a pleasing resource, a generous

occupation, and a fair path to celebrity, it is too frequently the vehicle of mortification.*

Are females alike qualified as the stronger sex for the cultivation of letters? It is not to be denied that as some have shone in the delicacies of art, so have some been endowed with admirable intellectual energies. Yet, even under the fostering hand of encouragement and able tuition, this has proved very rare: and it is rather to be inferred, that the mind of women is better adapted for the lower departments of literature, such as epistolary writings, sonnets, romances, novels and tales, that lighter matter, which has greater analogy to their feebler system.

If a country under the highest culture can afford no more than a certain product, which is precisely adequate to the wants of the stationary inhabitants, the governor is not prudent who contrives projects for enlarging the population. Perhaps the habits and pursuits of the natives of the British empire contribute to extend the sphere of disappointment, though the very reverse be the benevolent design of their encouragement. They render life a lottery wherein millions are ready to adventure, all in eager expectation of the prize which must be re-

* *Barberius* de Miseria Poetarum. *Spizelius* Infelix Literatus. *Gratianus* de Casibus Virorum illustrium. *Irailh* Querelles Litteraires depuis Homere jusqu' a nos jours. Many examples may be also found in the later works of *D'Israeli* relative to this subject.

served for a single individual only. Their speculations fail: it must be so: nothing can avert the failure:—then what is to be their fate? We ought always to endeavour to dip a little into futurity, by reasoning on past and consulting present circumstances.

By common consent, what we technically denominate a good education, is esteemed the highest of benefits that can be conferred in this country, one which may eventually lead to all others. Hence those innumerable institutions, those plans and devices invented by a universal anxiety to bestow it on every individual alike, without exception or discrimination. Hence, without consulting the budgings of genius, or the plodding of industry, both breaking through the earliest restraints, an equal distribution of tuition in every different branch is allotted to every different pupil. But it seems doubtful whether the promised effects so often follow as concluded by public expectation: consequently, whether the projects with which we are so much occupied, truly promote the welfare and felicity of Britain. Possibly their origin is less the result of cautious and deliberate reflection, than arising from one numerous class of society, stimulated by pride to put their connections on a par with the best in knowledge; and from another numerous class, whose benignity is unwilling to withhold any acquisition which fortune may render profitable. Instruction given indiscriminately, always will be useful in so far as contributing to a uniformity of opinions; and

as inculcating those moral principles which can advantage society, by shewing the duties to be practised, and the rights to be preserved from infringement. It is necessary to the extent of imparting the rudiments which shall enable each to regulate his own private concerns. But the very constitution of society is hostile to all its members becoming learned ; for it is impossible that they can have an outlet for their learning.—A good education is precisely the cultivation of the elements of literature : advancing a little way beyond them, is entering on its practice : but how far ought this to go, or rather, how shall it be restricted ?

Probably contemplation is unfriendly to that kind of action wherein so great a portion of happiness is concentrated, while generating speculative views of unattainable objects, and along with them a refinement of feeling or susceptibility, which renders its owners more keenly alive to their frustration. The most useful and contented members of the community are almost invariably somewhat depressed,—those who are occupied in providing for its daily wants and their own : It is they whose services to themselves and to others are the most indispensable : It is they whose numbers require to be perpetually renewed, and who have the least occasion for learning. Many of those who might follow suitable vocations in their own department, possibly are seduced from it to compete for higher distinctions, after which they may ever languish in vain ; and which,

even if obtained, would add little to their own comfort or to the public welfare: while the opinions of many who remain, certainly become unsettled and disturbed, and propagate dissatisfaction. The sphere of disappointment is enlarged, while tranquillity is impaired, and the common good mistaken. This emergence from ignorance we are now beholding under its least unfavourable aspect: for infinite public and private evils could be defined as its concomitants. The selection of genius, the protection of industry, encouragement of the dawnings of excellence, are laudable: but, on the whole, the universal diffusion of education to the present extent that we incline to carry it, seems of very questionable benefit; and finally it may be found, that its utility is proportioned to its restriction. Literary education and moral instruction are imprudently confounded: their difference is very great and important: nor have those a just discrimination of things who believe that the one necessarily conveys the other: Therefore it is the duty of the governor to be cautious of exposing the multitude to adversity, for the eventual prosperity of one, or of very few.

The sting of ingratitude sinks deep. One cannot disguise from himself the benefit he has conferred on his neighbour: his own intentions, and their favourable issue, compel his observation of the fact: without any selfish motive, he has done his duty: he thinks it no more. If its performance lead to a

common advantage, he is not to be excepted from the commendation received by his colleagues, should they have shared in the undertaking. His reward of consciousness that he has not failed, we might affirm, ought to be deemed enough, comparing it with the recompence allotted for the practice of other obligatory virtues. How few are selected for the wreath of honour which an army has won in the field of victory! Endless favours are heaped on a single individual, in which justice demands that many more should participate. Sometimes it is craftily devised, that some prominent figure, absorbing all the credit, should be opposed to the eyes of the public: his compeers are left in the shade. How many brave men have been scarcely able to subsist themselves by military service, without much tenderness shewn to their families by their employers: and, after spending their best years in the most arduous exertions, have been disappointed of that promotion which they merited! Cannot many show their wounds and fractures from an hundred ships of the line and battalions innumerable in Britain, who, after willingly taking the forlorn hope, and pouring forth streams of their blood, have yet been denied any patronage of their valour, unless some impure channel were drained to gain it! But the clamours of disappointment are suppressed from the apprehensions of offence, and we are generally too far removed from the injured to hear them. Slights, even where there is

no title to expect consideration, are painful; but “when persons we do not esteem are preferred to those of higher merit, an honest concern and indignation arise.” * Too often are the just pretensions of the meritorious rated as secondary recommendations in their behalf, not in military service only: But the governor who truly honours his country, will prove it by recompensing the honourable.

The selfish endeavour to advance themselves through the medium of their friends; the disinterested, their friends through themselves. The selfish court us for the benefit we can do them: let us study their conduct: they humble themselves very low, they fawn, and flatter: they are gaping for the recompence: they are greedy of favour. If a difficult undertaking be in hand, we are invited to co-operation. We should look no farther: for the moment a selfish man discovers that he can proceed alone, his gratitude for past benefactions all evaporates, he seeks after his friend no more.

But those must know disappointment best who traffic on contingencies, whose wealth and safety are dependent on the elements, and on human integrity. The tempest destroys the fleet and its merchandize: accumulated stores are consumed by some devouring conflagration: the confident sets himself to plunder, and the merchant is ruined of his all.

* *Hutcheson*, Moral Philosophy, B. i. ch. 7. § 2.

His misfortunes are great, and many fall along with him: but disappointment of the agriculturist may exterminate millions of the human race, even where life is sustained by only a measure of grain. Generally amidst commercial failures, we consider them little farther than how they prevent the fulfilment of civil obligations. But famine is the most awful of visitations: An Arabian physician, who witnessed the ravages of one in the east, relates, that an inheritance passed to fourteen successive heirs in a month.* This which of old is now partly averted by skill and industry, was not an unfrequent calamity in Britain. But reptiles and roots have often proved happy resources to the famished inhabitants.

Surely the disappointment of the merchant is more common than that of any other class of society, whether from merely being neglected, because he must rest more on prospects, on the faith of mankind, on the instability of the elements, or because his misfortunes cannot be concealed. The casualties of an hour may compel him to abandon his dwelling, and to begin the world again: his own honest dealings may be ruined by the ruin concomitant on others. No one is more celebrated for integrity than the British merchant; his name is a passport to the lading in foreign nations: no one is more deserving of honour and esteem. Yet whence, without conflagrations, storms, or shipwreck, come

* *Abdollariph*, Historiæ Egypti Compendium, ad an. 1218.

those reiterated disasters, involving multitudes in misery, and which, on a retrospect, it would seem that very moderate foresight might have shunned? Perhaps it is only from a culpable impatience to outrun the steady pace of many who have gone before us. Our forefathers gravely travelled a uniform course, advancing cautiously and deliberately along the path which might lead to fortune. Having reached the goal, after the longest employment of willing labour, and the lapse of well-spent years, they retired content with the return of their honest industry, though it were not splendid. We do not study equal prudence. While yet our understanding is green, we would cope with the maturity of that experience which had taught them where to look for the haven of safety. Pointing at a distant object indistinctly seen, we will not seek it step by step, or diligently labour day after day in hopes to attain it. No!—it must be won at once. Presuming on untried strength, we take a bold, an adventurous, and rapid flight, without spying out a place of rest, or some asylum for secure retreat if baffled. We strain ourselves beyond our powers: borne up ever so little, we soar still higher and higher, until our wings, no longer able to sustain the weight, treacherously fail us, and we are precipitated downwards never to rise again.

Every thing in Britain is merchandize: all is to be converted to profit, all is the subject of wild speculations, wherein the success of one, which must be

ascribed either to chance or to some singular accident, invites many imitators to their inevitable ruin. They inconsiderately overlook the facility with which a country may be overstocked by adventurers framing their own character; and that although there is room for one, there is none for another. All embarking in the common pursuit, therefore, are real adversaries, of whom some only can stand as the others fall. Meantime, instead of patiently awaiting the uncertain issue, each concludes, by unlimited indulgence in extravagant luxury, that it must be successful. Because his views are great, so must be his expenditure: they are disappointed, and he spreads mischief among all who have known him.

The extent to which speculations are carried is alike criminal and absurd: but so long as one can persuade his neighbour to give him gold and diamonds for the mere traces of his name on paper, there is held out the strongest encouragement to adventure—nay, it is temptation, against probity.*

Sometimes disappointment is the well-merited penalty of selfishness. We are content to watch

* About a century ago, the commentator on *Murali's Letters on the English and French Nations*, p. 15, says: "All our tradesmen in England take abundance of pains: and before that unhappy affair of the South Sea, no one proposed to enrich himself under thirty years care and industry in his respective trade. They were contented with a moderate profit, and left it to time to make their fortunes."

the declining age of the wealthy, in hopes of profiting by its close: our attentions are very sedulous, perhaps too much so; for selfishness is apt to generate servility. The distant moment arrives: our friend or patron has been called away: full of expectation, curiosity is on the rack to know how we have been dealt with. But we find ourselves neglected and forgot. We are cruelly mortified. Have we any right to complain?—We have survived indeed as we desired, but without the end for which we wished survivance. We call our time mis-spent, because avaricious miscalculations have defeated us. Had our cares originated in the purer source of reverential love, or of disinterested benevolence, had they been devoted to amuse, and sooth, and soften the hours of age and infirmity, we should now regret that society is deprived of a member whom we had sufficient virtue to esteem, we should lament a friend; in short, we should not be exclusively occupied about ourselves. Further, we have to be self-accusers of a manifest imprudence, by indulging hope without encouragement, and resting on the contingency of what was absolutely within another's controul to bestow. Relatives ought not to disappoint each other's reasonable expectations: but no one is justified in passing an idle existence, which may be shorter than that of his fathers. The better discretion of the expectant will teach him, to relieve his necessities, if he have any, in the pursuits of honest industry; a more honourable occupation

than merely lying in wait for the hour that his predecessor shall breathe his last.

A thousand other frustrations from a thousand other sources may be conceived without illustration; for amidst the infinite projects, pursuits, and expectations, amidst all the rational or irrational wishes indulged by mankind, amidst the multiform visions floating in the mind, there are none but may be neutralized and defeated.

Yet reviewing disappointments in merely the invasion of indolent tranquillity, in the regrets of domestic infelicity, in the abortive hopes of reputation, honour, and riches, or in the mortification of neglected energies, they vanish as nought before the tyranny of mankind sacrificing patriots for their patriotism, the innocent because they are pure—or the menaces of nature hovering over mortals, from those grand convulsions of the elements bearing death to the spectator of their strife.

Behold the hardy mariner who, after braving the perils of the deep, finds his frail bark the sport of the winds, hastening to entomb him in its merciless bosom ! He who has ever slept and waked in danger, will not acknowledge fear. He defies the fury of the storm, he will not yield the combat without resistance. Now are his hopes cheered by its subsiding rage: he looks anxiously towards the whitened shore, and casts a wishful eye for succour. But again is the war renewed ; liquid mountains sweep the skies, the rolling surges break in hoarse mur-

murs, the tempest seems to roar for his destruction. At length he descries some mariners brave and adventurous as himself from afar, hazarding themselves to deliver him. His heart pants as they rise on the summit of the billows, or sink from view among their vallies. His prayers ascend to heaven : he joyfully hails them by his side.—Yet, alas! while their outstretched arms are already prepared to receive him, he eludes their grasp—his frail bark disappears for ever in the ocean.

Such are the scenes hourly renewing on the coasts of Britain.

What is the influence, it will be asked, that disappointment has on the passions? Our dispositions remain placid, good, and complying, only in so far as elicited by the partial indulgence of our wishes, and while the malevolent affections are permitted to lie dormant. But failure in the lawful objects of expectation, our defective success in rational pursuits, our postponement after an irreproachable life, to those who cannot boast a deserving action, inevitably throw a gloom over the happiest moments, or arouse the demon of discontent. Patience may bear contrariety once and again : but patience, like the strength of the personal frame, is at length exhausted, and the virtuous victim of disappointment is prone to ask himself, what are the benefits he has derived from virtue? Is not the mind itself vitiated by this frequent visitation,—indurated to inflexibility, becoming harsh and morose, or relaxed in facility?

So do we sometimes witness the unfortunate trying to banish reflection by the artificial means of temporary exhilaration, effectual for the instant indeed, but only hurrying him more rapidly towards irretrievable ruin. We have cautions not to tamper with the hopes of men.

The disappointments inseparable from human life are innumerable ; yet are not many, far exceeding some of those we have named, occasioned by mankind themselves ? Some may think their desires are just and reasonable, and in truth they would be so in those situations, and under those qualifications, which each erroneously ascribes to himself, or calls his own. But they form certain expectations to the accomplishment of which all their views are bent ; nor is any thing satisfactory short of the great object contemplated, not even that seeming equivalent, or of paramount advantage. Undoubtedly it is frequently in our power to conquer by duly measuring the strength of our opponent. Victory, therefore, may depend on choice—we are vanquished by aiming at too much. Not that untoward crosses are unprepared for our surprisal or defeat, but we shall have fewer disappointments by restricting ourselves within visible boundaries, than by looking where our feet cannot go. One confidently believes that the connection between himself and the object of his hope is immediate, but it is remote ; he concludes that it is uniform and uninterrupted, but some essential hidden links are deficient. He cre-

mits himself in the firm, lasting, and undisputed possession of a benefit, but he knows not that its tenure is frail and faulty. Thus are so many visionaries created by themselves.

Disappointment, and consequent discontents, may be imprudently spread throughout a whole nation; by the very principles instilled into the people, though without any such design, or necessarily leading to such an issue. Thousands would be well content, and enjoy their humble lot, were not a distaste for it excited by opening the road to one which is falsely called a better. If those in the lower sphere be taught to prepare themselves for a higher fortune, and set their eyes on its attainment, they must be disappointed as much, we have already signified, in proportion to their numbers as to their respective qualities; for that higher fortune can belong to very few: and if not to esteem their condition the best, be inculcated into all, they may lose their relish for its real pleasures.

Disappointments are cruelly aggravated by our peculiar temper and frame of mind, which see disasters only, and overshadow us with melancholy. It is dispelled as the rays of hope begin to break again; our wonted feelings are restored, we are revived to the sweets of existence. A candid comparison discovers the lot of many to be worse than our own.

It is the part of a vigorous mind to arm itself against the calamities incident to humanity, to rise

above disappointment. The task is hard indeed; but where is the task which may not be conquered? and fortitude with resignation will be always a healing balsam to the wounded spirit. We have not been able to probe futurity: let us then have the consolatory reflection, that the magnitude of the evil is not owing to ourselves. The regrets which flow from nature, must be charged to nature: she has refused to unveil the mystery of her ordinances: she has framed us with sensibilities, which unhappily have been awakened to injure our peace. Time will quell the perturbation. Those may grieve whose affections are unrequited: those may complain whose deserts are disregarded; nor is it unreasonable that they should feel the slight. The soldier who has bravely mounted the breach, and bled in his country's cause, cannot behold the badge of merit decorating the minion who never faced danger, without an honest indignation, for it should have been his own. The sage philosopher, the patriotic citizen, cannot patiently witness the recompence of celebrity, wealth, and honours, multiplied on them who have only multiplied words without knowledge, or who never had energies to employ.

However, let all the regrets thence arising be only transient. Such men whose name will live after things have changed, should be considered to have suffered a kind of ingratitude, reflecting discredit on those withholding the gift, in proportion to the merit ne-

glected. Discernment of their contemporaries, and impartial posterity, will give them genuine praise.

Philosophy must be largely bestowed, indeed, to sustain us under the bitterness of disappointment. But cultivating its precepts, and especially contemplating the dispensations allotted to the worthy, will prove our own calamities inferior, and show that, unless we could controul events, we shall never be otherwise than liable to uncertainty.

CHAPTER IX.

PREPARATION OF THE MIND FOR WORLDLY INCIDENTS.

MAN is beset with evils. The rigours of climate, his personal weakness, the inroads of disease, endless disappointments, the wickedness of his fellow-creatures, and the seduction of his passions, all conspire to rob him of his peace. It would be too presumptuous to affirm, that the world could subsist under perpetual summer only, that the frame of all should be robust, that the human race should not be susceptible of any malady, that virtue alone should flourish, and that vice should be totally unknown. There seem to be necessary consequences in the natural constitution of the universe, certain principles and parts in reciprocal relation and dependence from causes which we vainly attempt to scrutinize. Our most intimate acquaintance with them is no more than shallow conjecture ; the deeper we endeavour to probe into their arrangement, the farther are they found to be removed from mortals.

What is it that enables us to maintain the un-deviating path of rectitude ; that sustains us under multiplied disasters ; that inures us to the visitations of sickness and penury, the privation of

our beloved, and the tortures of our imbecillity under the tyranny of men? Along with our suffering, a counteracting sentiment is generated in the mind, which teaches resignation, inspires hope, and forbids despair. It heals our wounded sensibilities, it cheers our drooping spirits, revives us from sorrow, and banishes the haggard aspect of misery. Fortitude is the name of this precious antidote, one which none but the benignity of heaven could devise for the relief of mankind. By fortitude, the feeblest of our species are raised to a par with the strongest; and while the powerful, the bold, and the arrogant are ready to sink, it supports the meek and the humble: when the innocent are oppressed, it blunts the edge of their affliction, it elevates the soul to confidence in the ultimate rewards of virtue, it mitigates pain, and irradiates the prospects of death.

How wise and benevolent, therefore, is such a compensation, to counterbalance the waverings of the heart, the long-continued, ever-renovating series of human calamities! How essential that there should be such an invisible provision for human welfare! We are constantly compelled to summon it to our assistance, to hold it in reserve, to offer it in opposition; for so are our earthly circumstances appointed, that the intervals are short, permitting us to dispense with its manifold profits.

Were it not for fortitude, man would be unfit to live. He could neither resist the necessities which

attach to him in solitude, the treacherous pleadings in his own favour, nor the mischiefs with which society environs him. Wanting energy for self-preservation, and courage for self-defence, he could not maintain his existence; he would yield before the injuries and injustice of his neighbours; the casualties of the world would quickly abridge his course: He would be submerged amidst his imperfections. It is vain to think ourselves our own unerring guides; it is vain to hope for uninterrupted health or fortune. Daily experience testifies the transience of both; and that our best expectations must be only of an intermixture of good and evil. But enjoyments lapse unnoticed: our passing pains are accounted everlasting. How keen are our sensibilities, how easily are our hearts disquieted, the most trivial incidents disconcert us, insomuch that on a retrospect we are astonished at their insignificance, and wonder that we could have been disturbed! Solitude is no protection from inconvenience: connections with society multiply our cares a thousand fold. Like the multifarious forms of error, the shape, variety, and intensity of distress continually assailing our system is infinite. But as fortitude is ready to strengthen the mind when necessity is urgent, graver disasters awakening the stronger energies of the soul, are borne with greater resignation than slighter grievances of perpetual recurrence. Were this impenetrable shield wrested from our defence, we should be rendered incapable

alike of self-conduct, and of subsisting beneath the accumulated contrarieties of life.

Fortitude, however, is not invariably to be the opponent of adversity. It is no less important to the prosperous than to the unfortunate: for it is equally valuable to all in their journey through their mortal condition. Mental vigour and equanimity, that firmness and resolution enabling us to meet the accidents of life without unseemly elation or unmanly depression, are of equal profit. Mediocrity in every thing seems the proper allotment for mankind. Prosperity itself is not easily and suitably borne: it bewilders the weak, and dazzles the strong: No sooner is our fortune illumed by an unexpected gleam of sunshine, than we erect ourselves against heaven, and claim the merit of having opened the clouds. Prosperity exalts a man above himself: he forgets to what he owes it; he calls it the fruit of his incomparable merit; he believes that it is due to qualities all his own. Rising in self-estimation, pluming himself in emptiness, he admits of honours for the pretensions of fortuitous advancement;* and sometimes presumption renders him ridiculous. Prosperity is often attended with greater perils than adversity; for there are few minds whose texture is so firm and perfect as to bear with impunity its sudden assaults.† The latter, by its useful les-

* *Sextus Aurelius Victor de Caesaribus*, cap. 39.

† *Aristotle Politic.* lib. vii. cap. 8.

sons, disarms anger, and humbling pride restrains our deviation from rectitude; the former encouraging arrogance, begets impatience, and frequently seduces from virtue. The same children do not come of prosperity and adversity—but fortitude is the parent of sentiments which will refuse false impressions of ourselves.

But first do firmness, resolution, patience, perseverance and valour, spring of fortitude: and last are found its strongest pillar hope, its best and closest ally resignation. Man, as has been explained, is endowed with many delicate sensibilities, and is animated by many violent passions. His sensibilities are designed to awaken the sense of danger, and for other purposes in his natural state; his passions are then for self-preservation, he has anger and resentment to protect him from aggressions, and reason to keep him right. Yet without such susceptibilities to arouse him, without wrath to repel, fortitude to maintain a steady course to brave danger, and courage to extirpate its source, he would fall an easy sacrifice.

Man, under the impressions of fear, is an abject being: and although susceptibility of alarm be essential to his welfare, he never fails to appear contemptible where his apprehensions are void of foundation. The brave have been always esteemed as prepared to protect their families, themselves and their country: and while the watch was theirs, those whom they sheltered have slept sound in se-

curity. Our estimation of valour, it is true, betokens how lately the civilized of our race have had to cope with barbarians, and their keen recollections of the danger. But let us not debase this high prerogative of nature, by degrading it, as some have done, with the name of a *mechanical* virtue. Is it not enough to say, that "the brave man is in reality what the precipitate and forward is willing to be thought? he never provokes unnecessary danger, nor is deficient in the hour of trial."* Still it might be the subject of rational debate, whether it be consistent that we who live under laws anxiously inculcating tranquillity should be liable to perpetual calls for the undoubted display of courage; and whether we should be undervalued or covered with ignominy, if not superlatively endowed with it. Certainly the welfare of society is deeply interested, that testimonies of valour shall be rarely required; and that most of our transactions shall be regulated as much by caution as by courage. But this is not sufficient in other states, where the torch of discord is kindled, or the clarion of war is ever ready to sound; where all must be prepared for the encounter; where they must slay that they may not be slain. It is indeed remarkable to behold the intrepidity of the valiant, to witness the cool determination with which they maintain their

* *Aristotle*, *Ethic.* lib. iii. cap. 7, 8. "There are five kinds of courage, besides that properly so called."

post, or rush amidst peril, while we are deliberating whether it be safe to remain beyond it. It is admirable to witness their contempt of blood and wounds, their ardour for victory, their familiarity with danger; while we sink dismayed, and quake for fear.* The name of courage is august: and as it strikes the ear, we conceive that resolution which despises pain and can encounter death.†

But fortitude is not the peculiar property of the virtuous: it is not dispensed to them as a prerogative which they alone deserve to inherit: for the gifts of heaven are few which are restricted. The vicious have been able to boast that they were invested with an equal share.—No, we ought not to say an equal share, for a good conscience surely breeds the greatest resolution: whence must they who follow the precepts of duty, be endowed with the most undaunted valour. Artificial wants, fomented by luxury, occasion the chief inconvenience suffered in civilized society: for we are far removed from that

* *Pellison*, *Lettres Historiques*, tom. i. p. 331: A French officer mounting to the assault of Maestricht in the year 1673, having missed his step, a soldier stretched out his hand to raise him; but a shot piercing it at the moment, he, without the smallest emotion, extended the other.

While the British besieged Copenhagen in the year 1700, a bomb shell sunk through the deck of a Danish ship of war into the gun-room, where a seaman took it up in his arms, the fuze yet burning, and threw it into the sea.—*Uring*, *Voyages and Travels*, p. 26.

† *Senault*, *de l'Usage des Passions*, p. 360.

condition which is content with little. If the vicious are adventurous in relieving themselves, it is from the temporary impulse of an evil principle exciting them to enterprise. But the virtuous, who persevere in laborious industry, or are willing to undergo such privations as give others pain, testify fortitude of a better kind. Still when brought to those final catastrophes abridging human existence, the guilty wretch often meets the penalty of his demerits as unappalled as the virtuous and innocent unfortunate who looks for celestial peace.

Maintaining a steady and undeviating course, has proved of essential benefit throughout life ; and every nation has held it reputable to despise our pains and sorrows. Magnanimity, amidst great distress, is beheld with sympathetic interest : we feel more acutely for those who rise superior to their affliction, than if betraying their sense of what we are conscious they must endure, and we respect their fortitude. Personal susceptibility renders us the least fitted for suffering : it is the readiest to unman the soul ; to alter our true condition, and expose us in littleness, did not constancy come to our rescue. “ Pain is the keenest enemy of virtue—but shall virtue yield undaunted ? Ye gods, how disgraceful ! The Spartan children never complained though torn by the scourge. The Lacedæmonian youth would rather die in their contests than confess they were vanquished.”*

* Cicero, Tusculanarum Quæstionum, lib. v. § 27.

But without investigating the extremity of personal suffering, or of mental anguish, which fortitude aids us to sustain, let us advert to certain inferior conditions, where its presence is essential: for although the passions are not to be illustrated under mental quiescence, mankind, in their ordinary journey through life, are not always in extremities.

Far from being content with the ample dispensation of nature's bounty, we frame an artificial condition for ourselves, by indulging in unnecessary wants. Incessantly desiring to step beyond it, we refuse to become habituated to our lot. The temperature of our climate is not sufficiently genial, nor are we satisfied to derive our sustenance from the products around us. Something else, a number of accessaries, have to be found, those which no bounded region has ever been fitted to bear: and instead of resolutely enquiring, "Are all these things so difficult to be procured indispensable; cannot we subsist without them; are ease and luxury conducive to our welfare?"—we convert them into so many necessities. Every thing is done to gratify our wishes: we traffic in speculations for their acquisition; we determine to hold by them when obtained: but we are contriving the means of injury; for privation of their enjoyment is so much suffering.

Did we soberly balance the sacrifices to be made in commanding the instruments of sensuality, with the real or expected profit: did we estimate the toils of amassing wealth, the means of gaining power,

for the promised pleasure of rising above other men, with its true enjoyment, we should find it centre in imagination. Identifying ourselves, however, with the objects of our desires, falsely impresses us with their existence. Admitting they do exist, that we reap the delights which long anticipation harboured ; we grow great in eminence, we revel in pleasure, we employ our opulence to be kind and generous, we rejoice in the trustiest friends, and receive the reward of virtue in unblemished reputation :—Alas ! after the indefatigable labour of youth, the occupation of life, the exercise of our understanding and knowledge, some dire calamity sweeps our all into oblivion, bereaves us of our friends, and robs us of our honest fame.

Yet one misfortune still greater remains,—to be unable to bear affliction.

None being exempt from such visitations, so should there be some defensive armour investing mankind to guard them from wounds which are not of their own seeking. We are prone to yield unresistingly : Not having prepared an antidote, we cannot find the cure : and too long an interval elapses in pain, disappointment, and sorrow. But some are not to be thus cast down. A bold, undaunted, and resolute spirit, trained in fortitude, helps them to rebel against misfortune. Every thing is for the best, say they : these are only the incidents inseparable from mortal beings. They dry up their tears for the friends of whom

fate has bereaved them ; they console themselves for their losses ; they resign themselves patiently to their pain or privations ; or hardily determine to begin the world once more.

It is thus that mankind are so much indebted to fortitude. It represses the injurious, and elicits the conservative passions : it encourages hope, it banishes fear, and is the foundation of moral conduct in teaching self-controul.

Examining more narrowly into the nature of this excellent virtue, it seems to resolve into various kinds : such as the fortitude of forbearance, the fortitude of pursuit or energy, the fortitude of endurance. It is mental, and it is personal.

In availing ourselves of its benefits, however, an habitual education in placidity, patience, and perseverance, is essential : for before one can become a master, he must have been a tranquil, patient, and persevering pupil.

§ 1. *Placidity*.—Quiet is the most enviable possession, a state of felicity when all the desires and passions are quiescent, when the tumults of the world are no invasion. But equanimity is to be preserved only by shunning external interference, and by that disregard of prosperity and adversity which enables the vicissitudes of life to be borne without being greatly affected by them. Habitual exercise of placidity moderates all the mental transports, so as to be unproductive of the inconve-

niences concomitant on excess; and the wild emotions disturbing the comforts of man in others, are witnessed as mere evanescence by the mind which is serene.

A stranger introduced to a crowd is bewildered amidst the diversity of objects, by fixing his attention upon them. Indistinct appearances, irregular motions, discordant sounds, confound his eye and ear: constant alteration of all the component parts of the unwieldy mass, prevents him from identifying any of the subsisting relations among them. But if no deep interest be taken in a single portion; if a mere spectator, he beholds the changes, avoiding personal participation, his perceptions remain as clear after mingling with the numerous assemblage as before it.

But mankind, who are merely passengers, conduct themselves as if they were to abide for ever: they incorporate themselves with the world, and form their connections as if they were never to be dissolved. They are not transient spectators, whose tranquillity may remain unmoved; but wilful participators, exposing themselves to turbulence. Is it necessary that we shall thus allow ourselves to be involved in disquiets, by sharing actively in every fleeting occurrence? Look at the contentious man in company: He searches around for some one whom he may enlist as an opponent: he wishes to create an adversary. His arguments are fruitlessly offered to the placid: they are heard with-

out reply ; or, if he does succeed in engaging others, the controversy is witnessed in silent observation.

It is chiefly by the interference of mankind that our tranquillity is disturbed. We lay our account with the warfare of the elements ; we do not complain of the blast of winter's rigour : Although surprised by the casualties of nature, for which we are unprepared, we become reconciled to them, and resign ourselves without repining. How seldom are the blind clamorous for the want of sight, or the lame impatient because they cannot walk ? Yet if mankind jostle each other only in words, it immediately creates an uproar.

Much of our placidity depends on ourselves ; for if we could resolve to disregard the external impressions of the world, it would not be impaired. If lesser evils render us more clamorous than greater, it is because we have not laid in a sufficient stock of resolution to bear them. We are voluntarily susceptible : forgetting that whoever allows his mind to be easily perturbed, at length exists in a state of perpetual perturbation. The shortest retrospect proves, that we are too easily disquieted.

Nevertheless, as the social bond is framed, the hope of permanent calm is vain : a combat must be always waged : absolute tranquillity seems incompatible with the progress of appointed things : it is permitted only in modifications. How could the affairs of the world advance under universal tranquillity ! We should receive the buffetings of na-

ture and the insults of men like so many statues, by absolute apathy. War would produce no stimulus; peace would bring no enjoyment; the seasons would pass unnoticed; we should neither sow nor reap; a good name would be precious no longer; the sense of dishonour would be stifled; the sweets of love, the warmth of friendship, ceasing to charm the soul, cheerless indifference would wield its icy sceptre. But man must be active, quick, and strong: he must feel the incidents of worldly existence, while preserving that composure which prevents his being hurried away by them, and present himself like a bulwark against the torrent.

Many are regardless of their duty to their fellows; they have neither probity nor forbearance: Yet if we permitted their imprudence to excite the interference of our temper, we should be wilfully laying in a store of uneasiness. In holding our account with disagreeable and untoward occurrences, we insensibly provide against them. "Never be disturbed by the rudeness and malice of others: Can they move your resolution? can they impede your progress to virtue? By no means. If meeting with opposition or molestation, be not affected by it, persist in your object, and preserve your temper. As it is weakness to yield to discomfiture, so is it weak to be angry with the impertinent."*

* *Antoninus Meditationes*, lib. xi. § 9.

But without awaiting the interference of others, we are the wilful disturbers of our own tranquillity, by admitting the baneful passions to take possession of the mind. We allow envy and jealousy to fill our breast, we repine at the better fortune of others, and are ardent in quest of that for which we have no occasion. Avarice has made merchants of those already opulent, and then they began to tremble as the winds began to blow. Our vanity leads us to court acquaintance with the great; inconvenience and mortification kindle the resentment of wounded pride. How many rancorous enmities has not a place in the senate procured to those who seemed to have been struck dumb on entering within its walls! How much animosity and uneasiness have people brought on themselves, by intermingling and too deeply interesting themselves in the concerns of petty associations, as if the very welfare of the world depended on them! By absurd resistance of the reasonable desires of our neighbours, we occasion our own disquiet. Compliance is the first promoter of peace. The placid comply, the stubborn resist, and contradiction raises a storm. When the wind and tide are opposed, the sea rages highest.

By thus interfering with the world, we frequently draw down annoyances on ourselves, which we are very ready to ascribe to the disturbance of others. But did we remain the same as while in the company of the contentious man, avoiding that which

is not our immediate concern, we should not be liable to so many invasions of tranquillity.

The more we withdraw from the world, the greater is our prospect of peace; for if it be true that the fewer our connections we have the fewer cares; as the world is one large family, of which all other families constitute a portion, by remaining amidst it our anxieties are increased. So has retirement a charm, for which no substitute equally precious is to be offered; and with which the wise will never part. “Why, in the name of the immortal gods, do you endeavour to disturb my tranquillity?” said Soliman, to those who offered him the sceptre. “Suffer me, I entreat you, to pass the few days I have to live in peace in my cell—and let my brother rule the Othman empire.”*

Incomparable virtue is denoted by undisturbed serenity. None of the stormy passions, none of the malevolent affections, gain access, to testify their abode by ruffling the composure of the soul. Despising the menaces of power, the inroads of the impetuous and the arrogant, and the machinations of vice, the great and the good have gone forth and returned with an unaltered countenance,† or have defied the worst that could be done by mankind.‡

* *Cantemir*, History of the Othman Empire, p. 350.

† Said of Socrates and Antoninus. *Cicero*, Tuscul. Quæstion. lib. iii. § 15. *Julius Capitolinus* in vita Antonini, cap. 16.

‡ St Basil answered Modestus, “He cannot suffer injury who seeks a celestial kingdom only: his sole possession being faith,

Yielding to impatience or resentment, is to invade ourselves: While turning all things to the best account, we are to consider many obnoxious circumstances as inevitable and necessary to be borne. They are not within our own controul. Let us take example by the willing domestics of a capricious master. Unreasonable commands are given, unreasonable services exacted; yet no repining is heard: they obey with alacrity, and perform their duties as well as they are able. Why should we permit ourselves to be disturbed, if decrees be irresistible?

Habitual placidity is to be acquired by repressing the feelings, by conquest of the passions, and calling on the exercise of reason. We learn in its practice to disdain the intrusions of men, and to undervalue the obstruction of our wishes, and the contrarieties of life. But permitting each transient trifle to generate agitation or uneasiness, is neglecting the powers investing us against it, and banishing the means of our own repose.

§ 2. *Energy*.—Tempering the mind to placidity, it is preserved in a suitable condition for manifesting all its energies. It is enabled to lay in a store

he cannot dread confiscation: One who wanders over the earth in the divine service, cannot be exiled: and death will unite him the sooner to his Maker." *Socrates Historia Ecclesiastica*, lib. iv. cap. 21. *Sozomenus Historia Ecclesiastica*, lib. vi. cap. 16.

of resolution sufficient, by means of patience and perseverance, to carry mankind through all their undertakings. If we subsisted in that condition where our desires were instantly fulfilled, we should never learn the excellence of any of these virtues, and how far they contribute to our real welfare. Thence has impatience spoiled many fine projects, and brought their authors to ruin. But it is a duty to persevere: there is disgrace in foiling ourselves by our folly. We are not to be easily dismayed, turn back, and desist from the matters of importance which have engaged us: we are to advance, and pursue them to the end. The mariner who is baffled, contends with the storm, or awaits a prosperous gale: Prudence takes the helm; resolution forbids him from revisiting the port of his departure.—What though we be defeated once; we try the battle again, and we are crowned by victory.

Nevertheless, the greater part of mankind are more capable of a grand effort than of long perseverance, which renders the promise of their best beginnings abortive; and in emulation with their fellows, they are at last outstripped by those of lower talent, who have advanced slowly, but with constancy.*

Exercising our strength makes us strong: patient perseverance leads to proficiency, success, and fortune. We advance boldly, without appre-

* *La Bruyere, Les Caracteres, tom. ii. p. 59.*

hending discomfiture. Many who engage in frivolous pursuits are soon disgusted, and languish for a change: many who venture on difficult enterprises, have overcome what was deemed unconquerable, because they would not be foiled, and became interested in the victory.

An infinity of subordinate agents must be put in requisition, even in trifling affairs: some attainments of no easy acquisition, are no more than the medium of reaching others: they are merely secondary in the road to those of greater utility. All the rudiments of education are repulsive: we must serve a long apprenticeship to the sciences and the arts. Mental powers and manual dexterity must be patiently and perseveringly exerted; meanwhile that one discomfiture after another is borne. But we may not retreat, though we find it difficult. The agriculturist does not forsake the crop *he has sown*, because the weather disappoints his wishes. So must we temperately follow our progress. Let us imitate the artist who, often baffled in his work, yet puts his invention to the rack, and at last brings it to perfection.

Framing ourselves by a long trial of patience and perseverance, we are confirmed in steadiness, and may fearlessly dismiss alarm of discomfiture. It is wonderful how much is to be acquired, how much is to be surmounted! Many pursuits, which would be delightful in solitude, and useful to society, which would be a high embellishment, are aban-

done, though undertaken, from defective energy to master them. Men with sufficient genius have failed to become skilful, learned, and accomplished, because they allowed themselves to be disgusted before their progress began to please them. Some entering on a professional career, after years of patient study and diligent service, have then abandoned their patience and their profession together, because they failed to meet with that attention which their known ability and sedulous habit would have most probably attracted.

We must try and try again, never yielding until the ruin of persistence stares us in the face. Of all foibles, vacillation is the least pardonable, while undeviating energy will attain the greatest objects.

§ 3. *Forbearance*.—Energy of pursuit, however, is not more conducive to the welfare of mankind, than firmness in forbearance, than self-denial and self-control in preparing the mind for worldly incidents. We should be able to resist the solicitation of the passions in regard to ourselves, and the importunity of friends and strangers.

Nature has framed us for the pursuit of pleasure, and the snare is daily spread which may entrap our virtue in transient enjoyments. But while nature has formed infinite means for our gratification, she has at the same time bestowed certain powers enabling us to judge when it is suitable. The appetites, the propensities and passions, never cease to

solicit: we are made for compliance, but compliance may be hurtful, thence we are strengthened to resist temptation. We forbear indulging ourselves: the tumult which the angry passions and the seductions of pleasure would excite is subdued.

External impressions in our own favour are calculated to abrogate the benefit and the necessity of self-examination, without which there can be no detection of error, nor any hope of perfection. We are blinded by self-love as by the most irregular of the passions: we are prone to think well of all that we can call our own, even though it merit no commendation. Some one praises the symmetry of our features; we believe him in earnest: Some one praises us for learning, courage, or generosity, qualities of which we can boast the lowest share; yet we take it all in good part, and put firm reliance in his word. Let the poison of flattery, however grateful, be rejected; and let us rate ourselves no higher than we truly deserve. If this be doubtful, what more is necessary than to compare our doings with those of mankind in a similar condition?

We are to believe the best of others; yet not on mere report. If, like ourselves, one be celebrated for courage, generosity, or learning, we should ask how it has been shown: what he has achieved, what are the charities he has given, or what is the instruction that has flowed from him.

The solicitations of our propensities and appe-

tites resemble the pleading of an agreeable friend, which would mislead us from duty.

There is infinite pleasure in compliance. To yield to the wishes of those whom we love, is as grateful to us as it can be to them. But consenting to importunity is seldom free of hazard: forsaking firmness to plunge amidst pleasure, to credit every thing of ourselves because it is delightful, to incorporate ourselves with the world on account of promised enjoyments, is to admit of our being carried away by the current, and we may be lost.

A facility of disposition is commonly productive of the utmost inconvenience: but the advantages to be derived from energy and forbearance are of the highest value. They invigorate and pacify the soul.

By thus habituating ourselves to placidity, by self-encouragement, by patience, by firmness and perseverance, we undergo a progressive education in fitting the mind to meet all worldly incidents, and to rise above them by undaunted resolution.

To be clamorous under great alternations of fortune, whether of prosperity or adversity, betokens that want of fortitude and resignation which is suitable to the earthly condition of mortals, and most precious for them to possess.

§ 4. *Endurance*.—Fortitude and resignation, however, are more peculiarly the attribute of those who have to contend with the turbulence of the elements, or who are liable to the more imminent

uncertainties of human destiny. Such men are like philosophers, who take events as necessary in the immutable course of things : and as those who, having the deepest sense of religion, believe that all which shall be is already appointed, they bow before the resistless decree. Thus is fortitude eminently displayed by the ruder tribes, whom nothing can deter in their pursuits, or appal in their sufferings : and thus also does it form the prominent character of some Eastern nations from genuine piety, and from their firmer belief in all sublunary events being the immediate dispensations of Providence. They know that to struggle against fate is vain ; perhaps they credit that good may come out of evil, and their lot is received without repining. Amidst many vices, “ one noble trait in the character of the Moors is fortitude under misfortune, which they possess in the most eminent degree. A Moor never despairs. No bodily suffering, no calamity however great, will make him complain ; he is resigned in all things to the will of God, and waits in patient hope the amelioration of his fortune.” * Experience teaches to repose with feebler confidence where the issue of our expectations is precarious : and fortitude or resignation are insensibly incorporated with our hopes : we are ready for the best, and prepared for the worst. If the winds put our wealth in hazard, we shall postpone accounting it our own : if

* *Jackson, Account of the Empire of Marocco, p. 145.*

despotism makes little value of life, we shall have small reliance on its preservation amidst the storm of human passions.

While complaining of fortune, we should complain of men : it is their caprice, their cruelty and wickedness, which are unceasingly directed against the peace of their fellow-creatures. But if productive of our ultimate welfare, their conduct, though their own reproach, ought to give us the less regret. It teaches us patience : if we refused this precept, we should be involved in eternal broils, led into constant dangers : if well disciplined under it, we learn forbearance, and forbearance guides to comfort spite of their tyranny. While the flagitious insult our imbecillity, and would impiously spurn us for the visitations of Providence, let us appeal to fortitude in our cause. While the proud and domineering assign the lowest place to a worthy individual, merely from his complexion, his country, his religion, or his vocation, let him take it patiently, and his tranquillity is preserved. He awaits his turn though it be late, and the rest are preferred before him : he receives the hardest fare, and the coarsest treatment ; he is loaded with contempt and obloquy. If patience can sustain him when unable to repel these indignities, their real impression will be incomparably diminished.* They can flow from the vicious only, availing themselves of their opportu-

* *Macdonald Kinneir*, Journey through Asia Minor, p. 239.

nity to be vile. That contempt which they would offer, is reflected on themselves; for they are animated by intolerance: they would stain the man who is marked by the stronger hand of nature: they would interfere with the truths of his religion, and hate him because he is an ornament to his country. Yet where unable to resist, it is wise to meet the reproach with patience, and abstain from kindling the faint embers which would devour us in their raging flames. “The wrath of the powerful is not to be provoked.” * ●

But the inhabitants of Britain, who have few of the powerful to dread, seem to provoke destiny, by voluntarily putting their fortunes in hazard. Multitudes are incessantly brought to ruin; for in no country are losses more frequent or more overwhelming. Fortitude is not wanting, indeed; but too often that proud and independent spirit, which does not console itself in resignation, nor will acknowledge inferiority, is ready to project some desperate enterprise.

Those who have suffered neither, must naturally conclude, that greater fortitude is required to endure sickness, or to be reconciled to personal deformity, than to meet the privation of fortune. That which is curable should be the least distressing: we shudder to behold some poor object crawling on his distorted limbs, denied the faculty of speech, deprived

* *Diogenes Laertius*, lib. viii. § 18. in vit. Pythagor.

of the precious organ of sight, or consumed by a loathsome disease, and we declare him supremely miserable. But we are mistaken : numerous examples prove our error : One who has been bedrid during the better portion of life is resigned : those whose features a devouring malady has rendered hideous, whose members are dislocated or defective, or have dropped off, are seen cheerful, nay contented. The lame, the deaf, the blind, almost invariably bear their calamities with resignation. As if nature, in her equity, willed to compensate what she had taken away, those labouring under personal imperfections are generally endowed with mental superiorities. An internal fund of contemplation, an aptitude for learning or ingenuity, productive of the happiest results, is substituted for the more robust qualifications for external enjoyment. The heart warms with admiration at the beauty and symmetry of the human frame. But the earliest impressions are the strongest : after a short, and especially after reiterated observation, we are satisfied, our interest lessens, the novelty wears off, and the charm is dissipated. Before the same sensation of pleasure can be renewed, we must forget what we have seen : it requires an interval to restore the novelty. Mental ornaments never satiate : for always renovating, they cannot fade : perpetual variety gives them embellishment, enhancing their value, and rendering their influence durable. They are delightful not only to the owner, but to society : it

is intellectual beauty alone which will disseminate true benefits, and confer everlasting fame. How does all this ensue? Apparently it may be ascribed to two causes; first, to that hidden principle which tends to the equalization of human fortunes, as shall be afterwards discussed; secondly, to fortitude teaching us to bear calamity unsubdued.

Have we not in this a most important lesson? The parent, whose child is defective or deformed, is not to brood in sorrow over it as a hopeless disaster. While the sufferer learns resignation to his lot, with due regulation the mental energies may be unfolded and improved, and break forth in the brightest qualities, to silence those regrets which might disturb the affectionate authors of his being.

Fortitude would be a useless provision in behalf of mankind, were nothing to be endured. Its influence is proportioned to the tenderness of our frame, and the acuteness of our sensibilities: and it comes to sustain us when we call for its assistance.

Pain seems the keenest enemy of virtue, because under its torments we consent to what if free of them we would refuse. The contempt of pain, therefore, is universally esteemed an indication of constancy; and the pusillanimous, on the other hand, they who allow themselves to be carried down by the tide of adversity, and are submerged without a struggle, fail from their own imperfections and imbecillity. Different hopes are entertained of those

who are known to be endowed with constancy, and our hopes are fulfilled ;—for the soldier of true valour never deserts his post from the urgency of the peril : advancing steadily and boldly in the performance of praise-worthy actions, the discharge of duty is to be held the reward of merit.

As personal endurance exceeds all other sufferings, mankind are most apprehensive of evincing weakness when their corporal sensations are put to the test. But in the same manner as a kind of education is practised to inure the body to torment, so it is voluntarily suffered merely for the ultimate indulgence of vanity, in testimony of religion, or in sorrow for sin :—in evidence of affection for living individuals, or in despair for the loss of those beloved :—or, finally, as an absolute display of the virtue of fortitude.

The ancient philosophers, mistaking the benefit of severity, believed that the young were formed to virtue by subjecting them to pain or labour, by lacerating them with rods, or wounding them with weapons.* The Alani made incisions in the cheeks of infants on the day of their birth, that even before being suckled they might be inured to suffering, as is also said of the Huns in the reign of the emperor Valens.† At the present day, the most da-

* *Lucian, Nigrinus*, § 27. *Opera*, tom. i. p. 67.

† *Jornandes de Rebus Geticis*, cap. 24.—*Historiæ Miscellæ*, lib. xii.

ring tribe of robbers in Persia are unmercifully treated, as their early education, to habituate them to that suffering which would otherwise lead them to betray their accomplices.* If these facts be true, we may admire the coincidence of the precepts of philosophers with the practice of savages ; and perhaps believe in the youthful depredator rather bearing the bite of the brute he had stolen, than disgrace himself by complaint.†

In competition for the rank of chief or leader among certain American tribes, an ordeal of suffering is passed which, to our nerveless faculties, seems more than sufficient for dissolution of the human frame. The fruits of the trial are seen in the fearless front presented to torments, contrived by a horde of demons disgracing the human name ; or in desperate designs, which never were rivalled by the boldest courage of antiquity.‡

But without either emulation or necessity, some persons have desired to try, by actual experiment, what extremities they were fitted to endure. Simplicius names one who laid a burning coal on his thigh, and fanned it there, to ascertain how long he

* *Macdonald Kinneir*, Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire, p. 146. Some illustrations of the manners of this tribe, the Gheskees, occur in the later works of *Pottinger* on Beloochistan, and of *Elphinstone* on the kingdom of Caubul.

† *Plutarch*, *Apophthegmata Laconica*—*Instituta Laconica*.

‡ *Adair*, History of the American Indians.—*Long*, Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter, p. 72.

could bear the smart: * Portia, the daughter of Cato, voluntarily inflicted a deep wound on herself, to show her husband that he need not be apprehensive that pain would make her betray his confidence: and the Roman general Mutius Scævola, by thrusting his hand amidst the flames, proved to the enemies of his country his contempt of pain. These remarkable examples illustrate the fortitude of the ancients: yet not less remarkable, it is related, that in the year 1743, when a young Indian widow was dissuaded from making herself a voluntary sacrifice, according to the custom of her country, by holding forth the torments of a terrible death, “ she, with a resolved and calm countenance, put her finger into the fire, and held it there a considerable time; then, with one hand put fire in the palm of the other, sprinkled incense on it, and fumigated the Bramins. †

Merely from vanity, or to comply with the fashion of the times, mankind are every where ready to undergo some slighter penance: But that is not slight where, for the sake of personal ornament, the naked body is carpeted with numberless punctuations, incisions, and lacerations, arranged in symmetrical pictures, or where hideous artificial clefts disfigure the human visage. Here are seen lines, curves, squares, and circles, the figures of animals, and other objects,

* *Simplicius* in cap. 18. *Epicteti*.

† *Holwell*, *Interesting Historical Events*, Part ii. p. 93.

drawn out by the cicatrice of deep scarifications, or by wounds on the flesh and the skin, as if produced by the pencil of an artist. Nor is this the work of a day ; for weeks, months, even years elapse before completion of the rude design. Many operations have to be performed, attended with exquisite suffering ; yet all are borne without complaint, for it is dishonourable to complain : and sometimes the nature of the ornament confers a character, or indicates the reputation of those on whom it is perfected. The history of personal disfiguration, for the sake of ornament, would show, that it is not peculiar to the modern tribes of the world ; and that it is now practised with such uniformity, that stranger individuals can be referred to their respective countries, while not a syllable of their language is understood.

If pride or vanity can bring the mind to despise suffering for the purpose of fashion only, so have they an equal influence in desiring to exhibit testimonies of superior fortitude. Prowess is shown in the west, principally by feats of personal strength and dexterity ; the humane are satisfied, the brutal demand a fiercer contest. In the country of Taka in the east, “ when a young man boasts of his superior prowess in the presence of another, the latter draws his knife and inflicts several flesh wounds in his own shoulders, arms, and sides. He then gives the knife to the boaster, who is bound in honour to inflict still deeper wounds on his own body, or yield

forever in reputation to his antagonist"—a barbarous competition for credit !*

We shall not enlarge these observations, by discussing the influence of fanaticism, that desperate aberration of intellect, converting men to maniacs : which has prompted them to abstain from food and motion, to refuse obedience to all the dictates of nature, and to hate the enjoyments of life : That cruel tyrant which has made them treat the human frame as brute and inert matter ; which has repelled the access of pity, sparing neither infancy nor age, nor friend nor foe, nor self ; spreading torture and terror, death and desolation.—O impious man ! Are the cares of Omnipotence, which have designed to provide for the pleasure and happiness of all the animated creation, to be violated, in converting sensibility to sorrow ?—Are penance and ghastly wounds, or the sacrifice of the innocent, acceptable to benignity ?—But consenting also to the wild enthusiasm of a frenzied imagination, heated by imposture, have followed numberless ceremonies in honour of the dead, whereby the afflicted vie with each in demonstrating love by the extent of voluntary laceration,† or purchase repose for departed souls by blood and slaughter.

In times of the most remote antiquity, it was

* *Burckhardt*, Travels in Nubia, p. 397. Taka is a territory on the west coast of the Red Sea.

† *Arago*, Voyage round the World, Letter 110. Part ii. p. 80.

customary for the Pagans to scourge themselves at the festivals of some of their imaginary deities: and many centuries after the origin of Christianity, when penance came in vogue, a new sect of fanatics arose, who came to be known by the name of Flagellants. This miserable delusion spread through all the countries of Europe, troops of devotees marching from place to place with flags and standards, and stripping themselves in the most indecent manner in the public places of cities, there practised a most unmerciful discipline on their own bodies.* Potent kings and private individuals, believed that incredible benefits flowed from self-castigation: Henry II. of England prostrated himself, with sighs, and groans, and tears, on the ground before the tomb of Thomas a Becket: "He submitted his naked flesh to the discipline of the scourge: and he received from each of the religious, of whom a great number had assembled, from three to five

* A. D. 1349. More than 120 persons in Zealand and Holland, coming out of Flanders to London, some time in the church of St Paul, some time in other places of the city, twice in the day in the sight of the people, from the heels up to the loins covered with linen cloth, all the rest of their bodies being bare, every one in their hand a whip with three cords, beat themselves on their bodies, going in procession, four of them singing in their own language, all the other answering them. *Stow*, Abridgment of the Chronicles of England, p. 137.

In the same year, longer details of their public discipline abroad are given by the continental historians.

lashes." * Henry III. of France, along with some of his ministers, joined the first procession of the Flagellants, when this delirious sect made a short and fruitless attempt to rear their heads in Paris, about the year 1583, for which he was deservedly ridiculed by the historian of his times.† When Philip II. of Spain was dying, he ordered a scourge, bloody at the ends, to be taken out of a coffer, and holding it forth, said to his attendants, "this blood is my blood, no not properly altogether mine, but that of my father, whom God forgive: He accustomed himself to this discipline; I wish the truth to be known, and to show you his devotion." ‡

Men have not inflicted such barbarous treatment on themselves to purchase the divine favour exclusively, or to make atonement for their transgressions; for not only in Spain, but in various other countries, they have taken pleasure in shedding their blood, or wounding their persons, to move the pity of their earthly mistresses, to testify their devotion towards them, or the strength of their fortitude. It is related by an intelligent traveller, that a few years ago a young lady of gentle disposition, of an amiable and lively character, who dwelt in a town of Estremadura, appeared in a robe of dazzling whiteness, on the day of a religious ceremony. A

* *Mattheus Paris*, p. 108. ad an. 1174.

† *Thuanus*, *Historia sui Temporis*, lib. 78. cap. 2. ad an. 1583, tom. iv. p. 152.

‡ *Brantome*, *Œuvres*, tom. iv. p. 319. Discours. 41. Art. 1.

gentleman of her acquaintance then present having enquired into the purpose of this extraordinary apparel at a time consecrated to mourning and penitence, she simply answered, he would soon discover it; and as she spoke thus, advanced to a window level with the street as a troop of Flagellants, whom she impatiently expected, made their approach. They stopped before her, and in an instant her white robe was sprinkled with their blood. She seemed delighted with the sacrifice, for it was an affair of gallantry intermingled with devotion; and so was the enigma of her dress explained.* The older authors deny that there could be any real contrition under the lash on such occasions; "for what compunction," say they, "can be produced on the wise among a troop of penitents, loaded with ribbands and fringes, scourging themselves in cadence and measured time, and who redouble the blows under the windows of their mistresses, or sprinkle with their blood the beauties whom they meet in the churches, or in the streets, careful on their part to uncover their faces?"† For some time this extraordinary fashion has been prohibited in the capital of that nursery of superstition; for the adulterer, if he will court the affection of his mistress, is no longer permitted publicly to avow his passion, to scourge

* *Bourgoing*, *Tableau de l'Espagne Moderne*, tom. ii. p. 289.

† *Labat Voyages en Espagne et en Italie*, tom. i. p. 282.

himself in her presence, and by the severity of his sufferings to excite her pity.*

Chardin, the Persian traveller, relates, that he knew men of sense and probity so deeply enamoured of dancing girls, that they believed themselves bewitched; and that all attempts to regain their liberty would be vain. Such persons were distinguished by the branding of a red-hot iron on different parts of the body, and especially the arms, sunk the thickness of half-a-crown. The more of these scars they bore, the more devoted were they esteemed; and they inflicted them while their passion was most ardent, "to testify to their mistresses that the flames consuming them rendered them insensible even to fire."† The like is said of the lower class of people in Tripoli, particularly soldiers and sailors, who, when in the company of Cyprians, shew their apparent insensibility of pain, by the application of fire to different parts of the body. They also suffer their mistresses to pierce their legs and arms with a weapon: "and those who evince the greatest degree of firmness in such trials, are of course honoured with more confidence and esteem than the rest."‡ Something very similar is alleged of the modern Greeks and Albanians: and no doubt

* *Townsend*, Journey through Spain, vol. 1. p. 110, 111.

† *Chardin* Voyages en Perse et autres lieux de l'Orient, tom. i. p. 212. Edit. 1811.

‡ *Blaquiere*, Letters from the Mediterranean, vol. ii. p. 74.

history can afford other examples of this uncommon direction of fortitude. *

But sometimes the softer sex have shown themselves capricious, in demanding a display of fortitude from those who wore their chains. Brantome, whose works are so replete with anecdote, relates, that he knew a very brave officer, M. Clermont Tallard the elder, to whom a lady said, "if your affection for me is as violent, and you are as courageous as you assert, pierce your arm with your dagger for love of me." He drew the weapon instantly, when Brantome arrested his hand, remonstrating on the absurdity of offering such a proof of regard or valour. The veneration paid to the female sex by the chivalrous fashions of old, may have actually provoked their caprice to try the utmost extent to which it might be carried, in thoughtless disregard of the perils they imposed. "I have heard a story," observes the same author, "respecting the mistress of the late M. de Lorge, one of the bold and renowned captains of his day, who being told so much of his valour, became desirous of discovering whether it truly corresponded to report. One day, therefore, when King Francis I. had the lions fighting in his court, she dropped a glove within the precincts while they were most infuriated, and

* *Hobhouse*, Journey through Albania, Letter 13, vol. i. p. 143. The Greeks perform the sacrifice "out of mere gallantry, in the presence of their dulcineas, serenading them and drinking to their healths."

then turning to M. de Lorge, requested him, if he loved her as he professed, to recover it. Immediately taking his cap in one hand, and his sword in the other, he went undauntedly among the lions. Fortune so favoured him, that the boldness of his carriage, and the point of his sword turned towards them, deterred their attack: and seizing the glove, he returned to present it to his mistress, an action which gained her own admiration, as well as of all who were present. But it is said that he afterwards forsook the lady, on account of such a needless exposure of his valour for her amusement.**

No such extraordinary exactions, indeed, can be instanced, to demonstrate the affections of the weaker sex; but they have testified as undaunted courage as the other in sharing hazards along with the objects of regard, or even to do honour to their country. Many courageous exploits can be told of them of old: They have joined the military ranks in our own era, and fought boldly by their side.† Even on the plains of Waterloo, some youthful Parisian females, who had gone forth with their paramours, fell in the sanguinary conflict.‡

It is thus that the same passion, or the same vir-

* *Brantôme Œuvres*, t. iii. p. 447, 448, 449. Discours. vi. De L'Amour de Dames pour les Vaillants Hommes.

† Two young ladies named Fernig, aged only 17 and 22, of unimpeachable character, the daughters of a Batavian officer, officiated as Aides-de-Camp to the celebrated republican general Dumourier, in the late continental war.

‡ *Scott, Paris Revisited*, p. 151.

tue, exhibits its subsistence under such a great variety of forms : and may be traced to such a great variety of sources. A readiness to brave evil, the contempt of pain real or assumed, to obtain paramount benefits, indifference under torture, and absolute controul of all the sensibilities awakened by the ordinary occurrences of life, seem the close of that education in fortitude which has been prized as most valuable by every nation. To a certain extent all have gloried in perfecting the philosophy which has been erroneously ascribed to the Stoics of antiquity alone. The Indian warrior who, returning from victory, passes his wife and children without endearments; the European general who represses his exultation as his own praises rend the air; the citizen who restrains the public demonstration of his sorrow; the barbarian who needlessly sheds his blood for reputation; and the widow who cheerfully ascends her husband's funeral-pile—have all acquired that self-command and fortitude rated by the ancients as the highest virtue.

But although the ancients extol the courage, the heroism, the fortitude of endurance, displayed on occasion of the greatest and most appalling emergencies, it could easily be shewn that they have in no respect outdone the moderns. In drawing a parallel between them, were it necessary, we should have to admire the strength of soul which human nature is enabled to summon up to meet the afflictions incident to this our poor mortal frame.

When is it that the highest benefit does not ac-

crue from an education framing the mind to meet worldly incidents? In what situations can we be placed, except amidst the fleeting joys of mirth and jollity, where we can dispense with and bid adieu to placidity, patience, perseverance, and all the preceptors conducting us to fortitude. They who have hitherto rioted throughout life, delude themselves cruelly if expecting it must so continue to the end: that they shall never require the aid of what must be the support of all others. Many who, in their jocund hours, thought it impossible that they should need fortitude to sustain them, who seemed the farthest removed from the frowns of fortune, have had the greatest cause to complain of her versatility.

Illustrious examples of fortitude among the ancients fill the page of history. But this is not a virtue the exclusive property of any sex or nation occupying any certain region of the globe throughout the successive epochs of time. Celsus exalts the resolution testified by the ancient philosophers over the reputation for fortitude claimed by the earlier martyrs to the Christian faith. It is hard to censure mankind while under pain and persecution: and prejudice itself cannot deny, that there were some noble examples of the most heroic devotion among those who suffered by the hands of the Pagans. Yet the truth of history is more sacred than the mere opinions of men; and so has it pleased Omnipotence to strengthen the human mind in extremities, that neither ancient philosophers nor

Christian martyrs have excelled the masculine fortitude of many modern heroines. Nay, it may be said, that some of the querulous writers of old, instead of humbling themselves in silent resignation to the divine decrees, too often obtrude their lower sufferings on notice, while the grand calamities overwhelming the others were borne with magnanimous patience: Like the modern devotee who groans under his own scourge, their complaints were loud that they might be overheard.

Celsus asks, which of the Christian martyrs can be compared to the Pagan philosopher Epictetus? When his capricious master wrenched his leg, he calmly warned him it would break: and when the tortured member at length gave way, he resumed with equal calmness: "Did not I tell you that you would break it?"* The mind of Epictetus, as his admirable maxims testify, was cast in no common mould. But Celsus might have found numerous other illustrations, perhaps more impressive. Marius the Roman general, when about to undergo a surgical operation, refused to be bound, though no patient had been previously free when the like was performed. Stretching out one of his legs to the

* *Origen contra Celsum*, lib. vii. p. 368, Edit. Cantab. 1658. A special punishment called *crurifragium*, commonly inflicted on crucified malefactors, was known to the ancients; and continued, to the disgrace of humanity, until modern times. But it seems very doubtful whether it was designed to accelerate their dissolution.

knife, "without motion or groan he bore the inexpressible pain of the operation in silence, and with a settled countenance. But when the surgeon was going to begin the other leg, he would not suffer him, saying, 'I see the cure is not worth the pain.' He felt that the inconvenience of the remedy was greater than the inconvenience of the disease. He resolved to be relieved: but half the operation indicated what he had to expect of the remainder, and he abstained from completing it." "He bore it resolutely," says Cicero; "yet as a man he was unwilling to endure greater suffering than necessary."* It is adverse to the principles teaching self-preservation, that mankind should either voluntarily wound themselves, or consent to be wounded: and hence is seen the gross absurdity and fallacy of voluntary penance for offences of which human capacity can neither appreciate the real extent, nor measure the adequate punishment.

Perhaps it is the hope of ultimate relief that enables many to undergo, with such incredible fortitude, those cruel surgical operations which terrify even in their description. Perhaps it is the love of life, which rivets so powerfully to the world. But it seems to require more than human resolution for the ignorant savage, wanting the use of iron, to amputate his own distempered limb;† or for the ci-

* *Plutarch* in vita Caii Marii.—*Cicero*, Quæst. Tuscul. lib. ii. § 15, 22.

† *Mariner*, Account of the Tonga Islands, vol. ii. p. 263.

vilized European to suffer a series of operations previously described to him as each being equivalent to a painful death.* Yet we impiously complain if our finger aches.

Josephus relates, that a sedition having arose in Galilee, he promised pardon to the people if they would deliver up ten of the ringleaders; whereupon they desired that he would himself punish the author of the tumult, whose name was Clitus, a bold and rash young man. "But," says Josephus, "since I thought it not agreeable to piety to put one of my own people to death, and yet found it necessary to punish him, I ordered Levi, one of my guards, to go to him, and cut off one of Clitus's hands. But as he that was ordered to do this was afraid to go out of the ship alone, among so great a multitude, I was not willing that the timorousness of the soldiers should appear to the people of Tiberias: So I called to Clitus himself, and said to him, 'Since thou deservest to lose both thy hands for thy ingratitude to me, be thou thine own executioner, lest if thou refusest so to be, thou undergo a worse punishment:' And when he earnestly begged of me to spare him one of his hands, it was with difficulty that I granted it. So, in order to prevent the loss of both his hands, he willingly

* Said of a French officer, M. Botanquet, in the preceding century.

took his sword and cut off his own left hand, and this put an end to the sedition.”*

Perhaps the infliction of severity on ourselves is a slighter penalty than our offering it to those who are dear to us. In the one case, we either yield to necessity, or comply with the will; in the other, we recoil from constraint. But even a high sense of honour, as it leads to personal sacrifice, so can it impel the nearest relatives to preserve their beloved from shame, in bereaving them of existence. The wounds of the mind are still more intolerable than those of the person; and most intolerable of all is being dishonoured. But here is that best gift of nature, fortitude, of no avail. No resolution can enable us to bear it: nothing but annihilation of the person can annihilate voluntary mental disgrace: and even the remembrance of the departed revives the recollection of the dishonour.

The Stoics affected to disregard pain as an evil; for it arose from susceptibilities against which the mind ought to be prepared: they held it magnanimous to disguise the confession of suffering. To this the system of their moral education led: and to take the examples left by the ancient nations,

* *Josephus*, in *Vita*, § 33, 34. *Bellum Judaicum*, lib. ii. c. 21. § 10. It was considered a very high testimony of fortitude, when John Stubbs, having lost his right hand about the year 1581, for a publication thought seditious, “uncovered his head with the left, and cried out, *God save the Queen!*” *Baker*, *Chronicle*, p. 361.

they seem to have been perfected in it. Their warriors, their statesmen, their philosophers, their citizens, all have displayed the most eminent fortitude in energy, and amidst peril.

The fortitude of martyrs for religion has been extolled to the skies; but history preserves none of the mutual persecutions for religion, properly so called, of the more ancient Greeks and Romans, who have immortalized themselves by their constancy. Possibly the same sentiments inspiring the Pagans with constancy as Pagans, were preserved unsubdued by themselves and their posterity when converted. It does not appear that this great quality is exclusively of a religious nature; on the contrary, it must be more suitably classed with the moral virtues: and as such, the ancients underwent an education in its precepts.

The man who perishes for religion, indeed, is strengthened by believing himself a martyr, though it be for the most erroneous opinions; and as some think there is a blessing in punishment, so does he hope, through the medium of persecution, to gain the way to paradise, and inherit a crown of eternal glory. Looking back, he concludes, that others will profit by his suffering; looking forward, he trusts for his reward in immortality. Yet, strange to tell! even those who denied immortality, and especially those who disbelieved the government of the universe, have shewn themselves alike bold and resigned as those who found in religion their final

consolation. Some who have been branded with the name of Atheists or Deists, or by any other appellation obnoxious to their enemies, or denoting their sentiments of things, have shewn the same constancy as the most pious of men.

Fortitude, therefore, is not the privilege of any peculiar sect, or race, or country : nor would it be consistent with the sentiments we entertain of the merciful dispensations to mankind were it otherwise. It may be doubted whether any one of the whole catalogue of saints has testified more genuine, calm, and collected resolution, or has possessed a greater portion of real unaffected fortitude, than a number of weak women, brought to equal extremities under circumstances entirely different. There have been female martyrs to religion, it is true ; and then they shewed no inferiority : but numbers who have been inured to suffering under tyranny, who have fallen the victims of fate inevitable, or who have become self-destroyers, would have an equal claim to renown, did fortitude alone constitute their pretensions to it. The names of Arria, Calpurnia, Portia, Theoxana, Servilia, occupy but the shortest portion of the historic page, though sustained by transcendant constancy.* “ Meanwhile Nero, recollecting Epicharis, from the information that had been given to him, he concluded that

* *Pliny* Epistolæ, lib. iii. cap. 16. *Velleius Paterculus*, lib. ii. cap. 26—88.

the female frame would be unequal to suffering, and ordered her to be put to the torture. But neither the scourge, nor fire, nor the rage of her tormentors, availed: Her fortitude was unconquerable. Her body was racked, her limbs dislocated—she was crushed together—and her light spirit fled. In this illustrious example, did a freed woman prove the protection of others, and those scarcely known to her, amidst such extremities, while freedmen, citizens, and Roman knights and senators, untouched by pain, betrayed their dearest pledges.”*

But how many illustrious examples of fortitude has not the female part of the creation afforded, since the race of the ancient Romans has ceased, and where their name never extended? The courage of warriors, the calmness of philosophers, is justly extolled; like the constancy of martyrs, danger, despair, and death, have daily arose before their contemplations, or have been realized in many forms. They have clad themselves in impenetrable armour against worldly accident. But have they excelled the most delicate and timid females of recent history? It is no wonder, perhaps, if the helpmate of the savage, trained from her infancy amidst rigours and privations, exposed to the indignities which enemies can offer, and witnessing the

* *Tacitus Annales*, lib. xv. c. 57, describing the conspiracy of Piso. *Dio*, lib. lxi. § 27.

barbarous vengeance of her protectors, comes at length to imbibe part of their hardihood and ferocity.* But that those nurtured in the bosom of tenderness, to whom only adulation has paid its court, on whom the brightest scenes have ever opened, and who never knew sorrow, should rival heroes, proves the beneficence of nature in arming the mind with fortitude invincible. Bonds and imprisonment have been patiently taken in exchange for the downy pillow: the dread of the intimidated has been soothed during danger: they have been masculine in energy, resigned under reverses: and they have taught the stronger, by example, what weakness could do or suffer. Attempting to enumerate those who have thus distinguished themselves, we should be at a loss where to begin, how to advance, and confused in our selection. We should have to enlarge the names of each succeeding generation, as if time brought female fortitude to maturity. Were we to pass over the whole of preceding ages, to erase from the temple of fame, or blot out of the rolls of history, the remembrance of those illustrious unfortunates who met the admiration of mankind, we should reach another æra consecrated by renewing reputation. How many weak and defenceless females were destroyed by revolutionary France, to gratify cruelty, to sate malignity against themselves, or against their relatives! How many wives, and

* *Carver, Travels in North America*, p. 332.

mothers, and sisters, and daughters, were surrounded by the merciless barbarians, their countrymen, thirsting for their blood ; hurried from the arms of their kindred, buried in dungeons from which they never saw the light, until conducted to an ignominious death ! Deprived of their natural guardians, forsaken on earth, reviled by bitter taunts exulting over their misfortunes, fortitude came to support their trying moments : they disdained to shed a tear, or if overborne by mortal weakness amidst the greatness of calamity, they soon rose superior to their afflictions. The dignity of the Greek and Roman matrons was not lowered in the unhappy females daily falling under the enormities of revolutionary France.

From the sovereign down to those who should have been sheltered in their humility, all were distinguished by invincible constancy. The reproach of their enemies, they afforded them no victory, in lamentations or in the acknowledgment of sorrow.

Perhaps, amidst this multitude of the courageous, the first of modern heroines was Charlotte Corday : she who, by her single contrivance, alone and unprotected, found her way from the obscurity of the country, into the centre of the convulsed metropolis, and struck the tyrant of the nation to the heart. A stranger in that great city, she reached the very spot of her destination ; she advanced fearlessly, and, evading the jealousy of his suspicious attendants, arrived in the presence of the sanguinary mon-

ster himself, from whom she artfully obtained an avowal of those he had devoted, and the next moment was his last.*

The guilty assassin conceals himself under the darkness of night, and flies when he has perpetrated his deed. The virtuous avenger takes the sunshine for his witness; for he is not ashamed, and he hardily scorns to escape. So was it with this intrepid female. In the confidence of self-approval, she neither denied an action from which masculine valour had shrunk, nor alarmed for its consequence, premeditated security from a precipitate retreat. Those fatal receptacles, the chief abode of the patriotic, and which they seldom left to revisit liberty, were not irksome; neither did she feel any dread at the menaces of an inevitable fate. "To-morrow at eight," she said to a friend, "my trial begins—and at mid-day, to speak as the Romans, it is likely that I shall have ceased to exist." The same equanimity sustained her in the presence of her ferocious judges: nor did it forsake her when led to exhibit the last scene of her mortal career. As she had been hitherto calm and collected, her step was firm, and her countenance serene. Yet the heart of this undaunted female was by nature soft and feeling; for the same blush of modesty which tinges the cheek of the youthful

* "This Marat is said to love carnage like a vulture, and to delight in human sacrifices like Moloch, god of the Ammonites." *Moore, Journal during a Residence in France, vol. i. p. 338.*

virgin, rose when her bosom was bared : nor had it even faded the instant succeeding the sacrifice.—Charlotte Corday was the first of modern heroines.*

It is no wild hypothesis, that fortitude is equally the gift of females, as of those appointed to bear the brunt of the world and called on to be their natural protectors. The multiplicity of human affairs, indeed, is allotted to the stronger ; but it is doubtful whether a greater proportion of crosses does not fall to the share of the weaker, and especially from those by whom they should be averted. Were this conclusion just, it would show that they undergo a better education in patience and resignation, to promote their constancy had it been deficient. Certainly, amidst ordinary occurrences, we do not see it wanting : in pain and sickness it is still more evident : humiliations are submitted to without clamorous repining. Thence it might be fairly argued, from the gradual advances of the virtues we cultivate, that, under those great and final catastrophes adapted to make the stoutest heart tremble, they should stand undaunted—and it is so.

Although the renown of illustrious heroes cannot be depreciated, it receives no additional glory in comparison with female fortitude.

* *Segur Les Femmes*, tom. iii. p. 47. *Louvet Quelques Notices de Mes Perils*, p. 85. So great was the admiration excited by her conduct, that the legislative authority of those turbulent times found it necessary to prohibit her name from being given to various articles of apparel then in vogue.

An education which prepares mankind for all worldly incident, can never fail to be useful so long as they are prohibited from knowing the events allotted for the succeeding moment. The ordinary current of life may flow smoothly : cares may not be multiplied, or some may obtain fulfilment of all their wishes : but this is a state of things which we are not entitled to expect ; nor, although occurring occasionally, can we look for its permanence. We struggle hard to reach that prosperity belonging to our artificial condition : we struggle very hard to keep it ; nor can any thing be so transient as enjoyments. Our most precious gifts are only so many loans, ever ready to be recalled : we lose our relatives, we lose our friends : we must be content to part with life itself, for the simple lapse of time consumes all animated existence, and crumbles matter with the dust. Hence is it of such infinite importance that fortitude should arm against the casualties incident to humanity, that it should enable us to combat the wickedness, to withstand the seductive temptations of the world, and to quit it resigned with very little warning.

We, who shrink from the slightest suffering, may blush at beholding the undaunted resolution of the weak : but we have not been educated in constancy : we have not trained ourselves to bear what is not intolerable. Those who have not suffered, think they should never suffer : they act as if they held peace by a sure tenure. Let them beware, lest their greatest peril be wanting fortitude. If we contem-

plate ourselves, it is to discover their most unreasonable expectations. Our mental and personal constitution are alike unfitted for permanent tranquillity, unless inured by discipline; for both are endowed with such sensibilities, that neither can be long at rest: Elation and depression are in constant alternation, as no part of the arrangements of the universe stand still; and prosperity or adversity can easily unhinge the soul.

Conviction of rectitude, that feeling which satisfies the mind that our intentions are good, and our conduct, abating human weakness, irreproachable, is no mean ingredient of fortitude; because “of all things, none renders mankind bolder than innocence: for although the enemy who assails them be strong, and the earth combat in his favour, they believe that God should take their part, and that it is he that protects the innocent.” *

Nevertheless can we in truth deny, that even the wicked have put on the same undaunted countenance as the innocence of virtue when brought to extremities, and have acted with the same coolness and determination. Surely that artist must have been disappointed, who bound himself to the mast that he might study the terror of sailors amidst a storm. Which of the most hardened felons in this country refuses to give the signal for his own exit? or what did Le Brun discover in the most

* *Senault*, p. 345. Part ii. Traité vi. Discours. 1.

atrocious of her kind, but tranquil resignation, where he expected to behold the horrors of conscience, the shame of public exposure, the dread of an ignominious death, all portrayed in fearful combination? Though drenched in iniquity, she was as placid and composed as if a well-spent life had then to be rendered up, accompanied with universal esteem.*

It seems indeed as if the assaults of prosperity were the most dangerous and difficult to be borne.

Extremities call for the exercise of those bright virtues, which would ever remain quiescent in peace; and this may be held as a species of atonement, though too late to benefit the world. But habitual education forbids our meeting the rage of passion with a corresponding tumult; our trembling on the first menaces which are offered to us; or being moved with opening prosperity. Mankind always think themselves secure against evils from the latter; but good fortune, or the easy satisfaction of irregular desires, has been generally more pernicious than privation or disappointment.

If the inhabitants of the western hemisphere be not so uniformly courageous, or less disposed to acquiesce in unexpected dispensations than the Orientals, it can only flow from the difference of their

* Le Brun, a painter celebrated for his characters of the Passions, designed to perfect himself in his art, from the expression which he expected in the countenance of the Marchioness of Brinvilliers, on her way to punishment.

religious and moral education, together with their greater political security. Certainly it is adversity that steels the mind to worldly incident. Those who experience a long and unruffled course of things, are unprepared for its interruption: They confide in its continuance: Nor, in ascribing the greater regulations to Divine interposition, is this ever before their eyes, or referred to what they consider lesser concerns. If they suffer, there is always some one to whom they can complain and look for relief: if they are prosperous, they can always reap the full benefit of their prosperity with safety: no one can bereave them of it. "Human life is exposed in the East to a variety of casualties. Pestilence, famine, and tyranny, all contribute to diminish its security. It is natural to set a smaller value on any advantage, in proportion to the facility of privation. Hence the Orientals are not much disturbed at the approach of death, but resign life without a sigh. The mind is tortured when the blossoms of hope are suddenly torn from it; but their gradual decay is not incompatible with a kind of tranquillity."* Believing that all is decreed by the pre-ordinations of Providence, stifles the breath of complaint; because the source of universal good, a Being solicitous for the welfare of his creatures, cannot permit what is unjust. The moment of destruction in this temporary state is the commencement of life everlasting

* *Browne, Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, p. 438.*

in the heavenly abodes. Thus animated, the soldier rushes fearlessly amidst the throng of the battle.

Although the benevolent dispensations to mankind have invested them with the means of forging an impenetrable shield against worldly incident, and they improve on the gift, it would be strange if each of the various members of the human race could claim an equal share of fortitude. Is it to induce reproach, or raise astonishment, if those whom fortune seemed to have called her own, or who, immersed in pleasures, knew only the delights of life, should shrink from threatened pain? Or if that fair flower of nature, weak woman, whose notice assiduity strove to captivate, who, courted by adulation, enjoyed only smiles and balmy zephyrs, whom the rude blast never ruffled, but protestations of love and esteem sustained, now shall tremble on the brink of eternity? No! for even the callous would weep their fate.—Yet such are the bountiful provisions in behalf of mortals, that few sink under the greatness of untold calamity.

We are born to feel: The whole constitution of that grand system whereof we form a part, is framed to make a deep impression on us. But it is essential to our welfare to curb our inclinations, to stifle our emotions, to be prepared for vicissitudes, and endeavour to meet all worldly incident with tranquillity.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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